LETTERS

FROM

SPAIN.

BY

DON LEUCADIO DOBLADO

SECOND EDITION.

REVISED AND CORRECTED BY THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THAT a work like the present should appear in a Second Edition, implies such a reception from the Public as demands the most sincere gratitude on my part. I am anxious, therefore, to make the only return I have in my power, by adding, as I conceive, some value to the work itself; not, indeed, from any material corrections, but by stamping the facts and descriptions which it contains, with the character of complete authenticity. The readers of *Doblado's Letters* may be sure that in them they have the real Memoirs of the person whose name is subscribed to this address. Even

the disguise of that name was so contrived, as to be a mark of identity. *Leucadio* being derived from a Greek root which means *white*, the word *Doblado* was added, in allusion to the repetition of my family name, translated into Spanish, which my countrymen have forced upon us, to avoid the difficulty of an orthography and sound, perfectly at variance with their language. In short, Doblado and his inseparable friend, the Spanish clergyman, are but one and the same person; whose origin, education, feelings, and early turn of thinking, have been made an introduction to the personal observations on his country, which, with a deep sense of their kindness, he again lays before the British Public.

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.

Chelsea, June 1st, 1825.

PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

Some of the following Letters have been printed in the New Monthly Magazine.

The Author would, indeed, be inclined to commit the whole collection to the candour of his readers without a prefatory address, were it not that the plan of his Work absolutely requires some explanation.

The slight mixture of fiction which these Letters contain, might raise a doubt whether the sketches of Spanish manners, customs, and opi-

nions, by means of which the Author has endeavoured to pourtray the moral state of his country at a period immediately preceding, and in part coincident with the French invasion, may not be exaggerated by fancy, and coloured with a view to mere effect.

It is chiefly on this account that the Author deems it necessary to assure the Public of the reality of every circumstance mentioned in his book, except the name of *Leucadio Doblado.* These Letters are in effect the faithful memoirs of a real Spanish clergyman, as far as his character and the events of his life can illustrate the state of the country which gave him birth.

Doblado's Letters are dated from Spain, and, to preserve consistency, the Author is supposed to have returned thither after a residence of some years in England. This is another fictitious circumstance. Since the moment when the person disguised under

the above name left that beloved country, whose religious intolerance has embittered his life—that country which, boasting, at this moment, of a *free* constitution, still continues to deprive her children of the right to worship God according to their own conscience—he has not for a day quitted England, the land of his ancestors, and now the country of his choice and adoption.

It is not, however, from pique or resentment that the Author has dwelt so long and so warmly upon the painful and disgusting picture of Spanish bigotry. Spain, "with all her faults," is still and shall ever be the object of his love. But since no man, within the limits of her territory, can venture to lay open the canker which, fostered by religion, feeds on the root of her political improvements; be it allowed a self-banished Spaniard to describe the sources of such a strange anomaly in the New Constitution of Spain, and thus to explain to such as may not be unacquainted with his name as a

Spanish writer, the true cause of an absence which might otherwise be construed into a dereliction of duty, and a desertion of that post which both nature and affection marked so decidedly for the exertion of his humble talents.

Chelsea, June 1822.

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LETTERS FROM SPAIN

LETTER I.

Seville, May 1798.

I AM inclined to think with you, that a Spaniard, who, like myself, has resided many years in England, is, perhaps, the fittest person to write an account of life, manners and opinions as they exist in this country, and to shew them in the light which is most likely to interest an Englishman. The most acute and diligent travellers are subject to constant mistakes; and perhaps the more so, for what is generally thought a circumstance in their favour—a moderate knowledge of foreign languages. A traveller who uses only his eyes, will confine himself to the description of external objects; and though his narrative may be deficient in many topics of interest, it will certainly be exempt from great and ludicrous blunders. The difficulty, which a person, with a smattering of the language of the country he is visiting, expe-

riences every moment in the endeavour to communicate his own, and catch other men's thoughts, often urges him into a sort of mental rashness, which leads him to settle many a doubtful point for himself, and to forget the unlimited power, I should have said tyranny, of usage, in whatever relates to language.

I still recollect the unlucky hit I made on my arrival in London, when, anxious beyond measure to catch every idiomatic expression, and reading the huge inscription of the Cannon Brewery at Knightsbridge, as the building had some resemblance to the great cannon-foundry in this town, I settled it in my mind that the genuine English idiom, for what I should now call *casting*, was no other than *brewing* cannon. This, however, was a mere verbal mistake. Not so that which I made when the word *nursery* stared me in the face every five minutes, as in a fine afternoon I approached your great metropolis, on the western road. Luxury and wealth, said I to myself, in a strain approaching to philosophic indignation, have at last blunted the best feelings of nature among the English. Surely, if I am to judge from this endless string of *nurseries*, the English ladies have gone a step beyond the unnatural practice of devolving their first maternal duties upon domestic hirelings. Here, it seems, the poor helpless infants are sent to be kept and suckled in crowds, in a decent kind of *Foundling-Hospitals*.

You may easily guess that I knew but one signification of the words *nursing* and *nursery*. Fortunately I was not collecting materials for a book of travels during a summer excursion, otherwise I should now be enjoying all the honour of the originality of my remarks on the customs and manners of Old England.

From similar mistakes I think myself safe enough in speaking of my native country; but I wish I could feel equal confidence as to the execution of the sketches you desire to obtain from me. I know you too well to doubt that my letters will, by some chance or other, find their way to some of the London Magazines, before they have been long in your hands. And only think, I intreat you, how I shall fret and fidget under the apprehension that some of your pert newspaper writers may raise a laugh against me in some of those *Suns* or *Stars*, which, in spite of intervening seas and mountains, can dart a baneful influence, and blast the character of infallibility, as an English scholar, which I have acquired since my return to Spain. I have so strongly rivetted the admiration of the Irish merchants in this place, that, in spite of their objection to my not calling tea *ta*, they submit to my decision every intricate question about your provoking *shall* and *will*: and surely it would be no small disparagement, in this land of proud *Dons*, to be posted up in a London paper as a murderer of the *King's English*. How fortunate was our famous

Spanish traveller, my relative, *Espriella** (for you know that there exists a family connexion between us by my mother's side) to find one of the best writers in England, willing to translate his letters. But since you will not allow me to write in my own language, and since, to say the truth, I feel a pleasure in using that which reminds me of the dear land which has been my second home—the land where I drew my first breath of liberty—the land which taught me how to retrieve, though imperfectly and with pain, the time which, under the influence of ignorance and superstition, I had lost in early youth—I will not delay a task which, should circumstances allow me to complete it, I intend as a token of friendship to you, and of gratitude and love to your country.

Few travellers are equal to your countryman, Mr. Townsend, in the truth and liveliness of his descriptions, as well as in the mass of useful information and depth of remark with which he has presented the public*. It would be impossible for any but a native Spaniard to add to the collection of traits descriptive of the national character, which animates his narrative; and I must confess that he has rather confined me in the selection of my topics. He has, indeed, fallen into such mistakes and inaccuracies, as nothing short of perfect familiarity with a country can prevent. But I

* See Espriella's "Letters from England."

† He visited Spain in the years 1786 and 1787.

may safely recommend him to you as a guide for a fuller acquaintance with the places whose *inhabitants* I intend to make the chief subject of my letters. But that I may not lay upon you the necessity of a constant reference, I shall begin by providing your fancy with a "local habitation" for the people whose habits and modes of thinking I will forthwith attempt to pourtray.

The view of Cadiz from the sea, as, in a fine day, you approach its magnificent harbour, is one of the most attractive beauty. The strong deep light of a southern sky, reflected from the lofty buildings of white free stone, which face the bay, rivets the eye of the navigator from the very verge of the horizon. The sea actually washes the ramparts, except where, on the opposite side of the town, it is divided by a narrow neck of land, which joins Cadiz to the neighbouring continent. When, therefore, you begin to discover the upper part of the buildings, and the white pinnacles of glazed earthenware, resembling china, that ornament the parapets with which their flat roofs are crowned; the airy structure, melting at times into the distant glare of the waves, is more like a pleasing delusion—a kind of *Fata Morgana*—than the lofty, uniform massive buildings which, rising gradually before the vessel, bring you back, however unwilling, to the dull realities of life. After landing on a crowded quay, you are led the whole depth of the ramparts along a dark vaulted passage, at the farthest end

of which, new-comers must submit to the scrutiny of the inferior custom-house officers. Eighteen-pence slipped into their hands with the keys of your trunks, will spare you the vexation of seeing your clothes and linen scattered about in the utmost disorder.

I forgot to tell you, that scarcely does a boat with passengers approach the landing-stairs of the quay, when three or four *Gallegos*, (natives of the province of Galicia) who are the only *porters* in this town, will take a fearful leap into the boat, and begin a scuffle, which ends by the stronger seizing upon the luggage. The successful champion becomes your guide through the town to the place where you wish to take up your abode. As only two gates are used as a thoroughfare—the sea-gate, *Puerta de la Mar*, and the land-gate, *Puerta de Tierra*—those who come by water are obliged to cross the great Market—a place not unlike Covent Garden, where the country people expose all sorts of vegetables and fruits for sale. Fish is also sold at this place, where you see it laid out upon the pavement in the same state as it was taken out of the net. The noise and din of this market are absolutely intolerable. All classes of Spaniards, not excluding the ladies, are rather loud and boisterous in their speech. But here is a contention between three or four hundred peasants, who shall make his harsh and guttural voice be uppermost, to inform the passengers of the price and

quality of his goods. In a word, the noise is such as will astound any one, who has not lived for some years near Cornhill or Temple Bar.

Religion, or, if you please, superstition, is so intimately blended with the whole system of public and domestic life in Spain, that I fear I shall tire you with the perpetual recurrence of that subject. I am already compelled, by an involuntary train of ideas, to enter upon that endless topic. If, however, you wish to become thoroughly acquainted with the national character of my country, you must learn the character of the national religion. The influence of religion in Spain is boundless. It divides the whole population into two comprehensive classes, bigots and dissemblers. Do not, however, mistake me. I am very far from wishing to libel my countrymen. If I use these invidious words, it is not that I believe every Spaniard either a downright bigot or a hypocrite: yet I cannot shut my eyes to the melancnoly fact, that the system under which we live must unavoidably give, even to the best among us, a taint of one of those vices. Where the law threatens every dissenter from such an encroaching system of divinity as that of the Church of Rome, with death and infamy—where every individual is not only invited, but enjoined, at the peril of both body and soul, to assist in enforcing that law; must not an undue and tyrannical influence accrue to the believing party? Are not such as disbelieve in secret,

condemned to a life of degrading deference, or of heart-burning silence? Silence, did I say? No; every day, every hour, renews the necessity of explicitly declaring yourself what you are not. The most contemptible individual may, at pleasure, force out *a lie* from an honestly proud bosom.

I must not, however, keep you any longer in suspense as to the origin of this flight—this unprepared digression from the plain narrative I had begun. You know me well enough to believe that after a long residence in England, my landing at Cadiz, instead of cheering my heart at the sight of my native country, would naturally produce a mixed sensation, in which pain and gloominess must have had the ascendant. I had enjoyed the blessings of liberty for several years; and now, alas! I perceived that I had been irresistibly drawn back by the holiest ties of affection, to stretch out my hands to the manacles, and bow my neck to that yoke, which had formerly galled my very soul. The convent of San Juan de Dios—(laugh, my dear friend, if you will: at what you call my *monachophobia*; *you* may do so, who have never lived within range of any of these European *jungles*, where lurks every thing that is hideous and venomous)—well, then, San Juan de Dios is the first remarkable object that meets the eye upon entering Cadiz by the sea-gate. A single glance at the convent had awakened the strongest and most rooted aversions of my heart, when just as I was

walking into the nearest street to avoid the crowd, the well-remembered sound of a hand-bell made me instantly aware that, unless pretending not to hear it, I could retrace my steps, and turn another corner, I should be obliged to kneel in the mud till a priest, who was carrying the consecrated wafer to a dying person, had moved slowly in his sedan-chair from the farthest end of the street to the place where I began to hear the bell.

The rule on these occasions, is expressed in a proverbial saying—*al Rey, en viendolo ; a Dios, en oyendolo*—which, after supplying its elliptical form, means that external homage is due to the king upon seeing him: and to God—*i. e.* the host, preceded by its never-failing appendage, the bell—the very moment you hear him. I must add, as a previous explanation of what is to follow, that God and the king are so coupled in the language of this country, that the same title of *Majesty* is applied to both. You hear, from the pulpit, the duties that men owe to *both Majesties;* and a foreigner is often surprised at the hopes expressed by the Spaniards, that *his Majesty* will be pleased to grant them life and health for some years more. I must add a very ludicrous circumstance arising from this absurd form of speech. When the priest, attended by the clerk, and surrounded by eight or ten people, bearing lighted flambeaus, has broken into the chamber of the dying person, and gone through a form of prayer, half Latin, half Spanish, which

lasts for about twenty minutes, one of the wafers is taken out of a little gold casket, and put into the mouth of the patient as he lies in bed. To swallow the wafer without the loss of any particle—which, according to the Council of Trent, (and I fully agree with the fathers) contains the same Divine person as the whole—is an operation of some difficulty. To obviate, therefore, the impropriety of lodging a sacred atom, as it might easily happen, in a bad tooth, the clerk comes forth with a glass of water, and in a firm and loud voice asks the sick person, "Is his Majesty gone down?"* The answer enables the learned clerk to decide whether the passage is to be expedited by means of his cooling draught.

But I must return to my *Gallego*, and myself. No sooner had I called him back, as if I had suddenly changed my mind as to the direction in which we were to go, than with a most determined tone he said "*Dios—Su Magestad.*" Pretending not to hear, I turned sharply round, and was now making my retreat—but it would not do. Fired with holy zeal, he raised his harsh voice, and in the barbarous accent of his province, repeated three or four times, "*Dios—Su Magestad;*" adding, with an oath, "This man is a heretic!" There was no resisting that dreadful word: it pinned me to the ground. I took out my pocket-

* The Spanish words are *Ha pasado su Magestad?*

handkerchief, and laying it on the least dirty part of the pavement, knelt upon it—not indeed to pray; but while, as another act of conformity to the custom of the country, I was beating my breast with my clenched right hand, as gently as it could be done without offence—to curse the hour when I had submitted thus to degrade myself, and tremble at the mere suspicion of a being little removed from the four-footed animals, whom it was his occupation to relieve of their burdens.

In the more populous towns of Spain, these unpleasant meetings are frequent. Nor are you free from being disturbed by the holy bell in the most retired part of your house. Its sound operates like magic upon the Spaniards. In the midst of a gay, noisy party, the word—"*Su Magestad*"—will bring every one upon his knees until the tinkling dies in the distance. Are you at dinner?—you must leave the table. In bed?—you must, at least, sit up. But the most preposterous effect of this custom is to be seen at the theatres. On the approach of the host to any military guard, the drum beats, the men are drawn out, and as soon as the priest can be seen, they bend the right knee, and invert the firelocks, placing the point of the bayonet on the ground. As an officer's guard is always stationed at the door of a Spanish theatre, I have often laughed in my sleeve at the effect of the *chamade* both upon the actors and the company. "*Dios, Dios!*" resounds from all parts of the

house, and every one falls that moment upon his knees. The actors' ranting, or the rattling of the castanets in the *fandango*, is hushed for a few minutes, till the sound of the bell growing fainter and fainter, the amusement is resumed, and the devout performers are once more upon their legs, anxious to make amends for the interruption. So powerful is the effect of early habit, that I had been for some weeks in London before I could hear the postman's bell in the evening, without feeling instinctively inclined to perform a due genuflection.

Cadiz, though fast declining from the wealth and splendour to which she had reached during her exclusive privilege to trade with the Colonies of South America, is still one of the few towns of Spain, which, for refinement, can be compared with some of the second rate in England. The people are hospitable and cheerful. The women, without being at all beautiful, are really fascinating. Some of the *Tertulias*, or evening parties, which a simple introduction to the lady of the house entitles any one to attend daily, are very lively and agreeable. No stiffness of etiquette prevails: you may drop in when you like, and leave the room when it suits you. The young ladies, however, will soon either find out, or imagine, the house and company to which you give the preference; and a week's acquaintance will lay you open to a great deal of good-natured bantering upon the cause of your

short calls. Singing to the guitar, or the piano, is a very common resource at these meetings. But the musical acquirements of the Spanish ladies cannot bear the most distant comparison with those of the female amateurs in London. In singing, however, they possess one great advantage—that of opening the mouth—which your English *Misses* seem to consider as a great breach of propriety.

The inhabitants of Cadiz, being confined to the rock on which their city is built, have made the towns of Chiclana, Puerto Real, and Port St. Mary's, their places of resort, especially in the summer. The passage, by water, to Port St. Mary's, is, upon an average, of about an hour and a half, and the intercourse between the two places, nearly as constant as between a large city and its suburbs. Boats full of passengers are incessantly crossing from day-break till sun-set. This passage is not, however, without danger in case of a strong wind from the east, in summer, or of rough weather, in winter. At the mouth of the Guadalete, a river that runs into the bay of Cadiz, by Port St. Mary's, there are extensive banks of shifting sands, which every year prove fatal to many. The passage-boats are often excessively crowded with people of all descriptions. The Spaniards, however, are not so shy of strangers as I have generally found your countrymen. Place any two of them, male or female, by the merest chance, together, and they will immediately enter into some conversation.

The absolute disregard to a stranger, which custom has established in England, would be taken for an insult in any part of Spain; consequently little gravity is preserved in these aquatic excursions.

In fine weather, when the female part of the company are not troubled with fear or sickness, the passengers indulge in a boisterous sort of mirth, which is congenial to Andalusians of all classes. It is known by the old Spanish word *Arana*, pronounced with the Southern aspirate, as if written *Haranna*. I do not know whether I shall be able to convey a notion of this kind of amusement. It admits of no liberties of action, while every allowance is made for words which do not amount to gross indecency. It is—if I may use the expression—a conversational *row*; or, to indulge a more strange assemblage of ideas, the *Arana* is to conversation, what romping is to walking arm in arm. In the midst, however, of hoarse laugh and loud shouting, as soon as the boat reaches the shoals, the steersman, raising his voice with a gravity becoming a parish-clerk, addresses himself to the company in words amounting to these—"Let us pray for the souls of all that have perished in this place." The pious address of the boatman has a striking effect upon the company:* for one or two minutes every one mutters a private prayer, whilst a sailor-boy goes round collecting a few copper coins from the passengers, which are religiously spent in pro-

curing masses for the souls in purgatory. This ceremony being over, the riot is resumed with unabated spirit, till the very point of landing.

I went by land to St. Lucar, a town of some wealth and consequence at the mouth of the Guadalquivir, or Bœtis, where this river is lost in the sea through a channel of more than a mile in breadth. The passage to Seville, of about twenty Spanish leagues up the river, is tedious; but I had often performed it, in early youth, with great pleasure, and I now quite forgot the change which twenty years must have made upon my feelings. No Spanish conveyance is either comfortable or expeditious. The St. Lucar boats are clumsy and heavy, without a single accommodation for passengers. Half of the hold is covered with hatches, but so low, that one cannot stand upright under them. A piece of canvass, loosely let down to the bottom of the boat, is the only partition between the passengers and the sailors. It would be extremely unpleasant for any person, above the lower class, to bear the inconveniences of a mixed company in one of these boats. Fortunately, it is neither difficult nor expensive to obtain the exclusive hire of one. You must submit, however, at the time of embarkation, to the disagreeable circumstance of riding on a man's shoulders from the water's edge to a little skiff, which, from the flatness of the shore, lies waiting for the passengers at the distance of fifteen or twenty yards.

The country, on both sides of the river, is for the most part, flat and desolate. The eye roves in vain over vast plains of alluvial ground in search of some marks of human habitation. Herds of black cattle, and large flocks of sheep, are seen on two considerable islands formed by different branches of the river. The fierce Andalusian bulls, kept by themselves in large enclosures, where, with a view to their appearance on the arena, they are made more savage by solitude: are seen straggling here and there down to the brink of the river, tossing their shaggy heads, and pawing the ground on the approach of the boat.

The windings of the river, and the growing shallows, which obstruct its channel, oblige the boats to wait for the tide, except when there is a strong wind from the south. After two tedious days, and two uncomfortable nights, I found myself under the *Torre del Oro*, a large octagon tower of great antiquity, and generally supposed to have been built by Julius Cæsar, which stands by the mole or quay of the capital of Andalusia, my native, and by me, long deserted town. Townsend will acquaint you with its situation, its general aspect, and the remarkable buildings, which are the boast of the *Sevillanos*. My task will be confined to the description of such peculiarities of the country as he did not see, or which must have escaped his notice.

The eastern custom of building houses on the

four sides of an open area, is so general in Andalusia, that, till my first journey to Madrid, I confess, I was perfectly at a loss to conceive a habitable dwelling in any other shape. The houses are generally two stories high, with a gallery, or *corredor*, which, as the name implies, *runs* along the four, or at least the three sides of the *Pátio*, or central square, affording an external communication between the rooms above stairs, and forming a covered walk over the doors of the ground-floor apartments. These two suites of rooms are a counterpart to each other, being alternately inhabited or deserted in the seasons of winter and summer. About the middle of October every house in Seville is in a complete bustle for two or three days. The lower apartments are stripped of their furniture, and every chair and table—nay, the kitchen vestal, with all her laboratory—are ordered off to winter quarters. This change of habitation, together with mats laid over the brick-floors, thicker and warmer than those used in summer, is all the provision against cold, which is made in this country. A flat and open brass pan of about two feet diameter, raised a few inches from the ground by a round wooden frame, on which, those who sit near it, may rest their feet, is used to burn charcoal made of brush-wood, which the natives call *cisco*. The fumes of charcoal are injurious to health; but such is the effect of habit, that the natives are seldom aware of

any inconvenience arising from the choking smell of their brasiers.

The precautions against heat, however, are numerous. About the latter end of May the whole population moves down stairs. A thick awning, which draws and undraws my means of ropes and pullies, is stretched over the central square, on a level with the roof of the house. The window-shutters are nearly closed from morning till sun-set, admitting just light enough to see one another, provided the eyes have not lately been exposed to the glare of the streets. The floors are washed every morning, that the evaporation of the water imbibed by the bricks, may abate the heat of the air. A very light mat, made of a delicate sort of rush, and dyed with a variety of colours, is used instead of a carpet. The *Pátio*, or square, is ornamented with flower-pots, especially round a *jet d'eau*, which in most houses occupies its centre. During the hot season the ladies sit and receive their friends in the *Pátio*. The street-doors are generally open; but invariably so from sunset till eleven or twelve in the night. Three or four very large glass lamps are hung in a line from the street-door to the opposite end of the *Pátio*; and, as in most houses, those who meet at night for a *Tertulia*, are visible from the streets, the town presents a very pretty and animated scene till near midnight. The poorer class of people, to avoid the intolerable heat of their habitations, pass a great

part of the night in conversation at their doors; while persons of all descriptions are moving about till late, either to see their friends, or to enjoy the cool air in the public walks.

This gay scene vanishes, however, on the approach of winter. The people retreat to the upper floors; the ill-lighted streets are deserted at the close of day, and become so dangerous from robbers, that few but the young and adventurous retire home from the *Tertulia* without being attended by a servant, sometimes bearing a lighted torch. The free access to every house, which prevails in summer, is now checked by the caution of the inhabitants. The entrance to the houses lies through a passage with two doors, one to the street, and another called the *middle-door* (for there is another at the top of the stairs) which opens into the *Patio*. This passage is called *Zaguan*—a pure Arabic word, which means, I believe, a porch. The middle-door is generally shut in the day-time: the outer one is never closed but at night. Whoever wants to be admitted must knock at the middle-door, and be prepared to answer a question, which, as it presents one of those little peculiarities which you are so fond of hearing, I shall not consider as unworthy of a place in my narrative.

The knock at the door, which, by-the-by, must be single, and by no means loud—in fact, a tradesman's knock in London—is answered with a *Who*

is there? To this question the stranger replies, "Peaceful people," *Gente de paz*—and the door is opened without farther enquiries. Peasants and beggars call out at the door, "Hail, spotless Mary!" *Ave, Maria purisima!* The answer, in that case, is given from within in the words *Sin pecado concebida:* "Conceived without sin." This custom is a remnant of the fierce controversy, which existed about three hundred years ago, between the Franciscan and the Dominican friars, whether the Virgin Mary had or not been subject to the penal consequences of original sin. The Dominicans were not willing to grant any exemption; while the Franciscans contended for the propriety of such a privilege. The Spaniards, and especially the Sevillians, with their characteristic gallantry, stood for the honour of our Lady, and embraced the latter opinion so warmly, that they turned the watch-word of their party into the form of address, which is still so prevalent in Andalusia. During the heat of the dispute, and before the Dominicans had been silenced by the authority of the Pope, the people of Seville began to assemble at various churches, and, sallying forth with an emblematical picture of the *sinless* Mary, set upon a sort of standard surmounted by a cross, paraded the city in different directions, singing a hymn to the *Immaculate Conception,* and repeating aloud their beads or rosary. These processions have continued to our times, and constitute one of

the nightly nuisances of this place. Though confined at present to the lower classes, those that join in them assume that characteristic importance and overbearing spirit, which attaches to the most insignificant religious associations in this country. Wherever one of these shabby processions presents itself to the public, it takes up the street from side to side, stopping the passengers, and expecting them to stand uncovered in all kinds of weather, till the standard is gone by. Their awkward and heavy banners are called, at Seville, *Sinpecados*, that is, "sinless," from the theological opinion in support of which they were raised.

The Spanish government, under Charles III., shewed the most ludicrous eagerness to have the *sinless purity* of the Virgin Mary added by the Pope to the articles of the Roman Catholic faith. The court of Rome, however, with the cautious spirit which has at all times guided its spiritual politics, endeavoured to keep clear from a stretch of authority, which, even some of their own divines would be ready to question; but splitting, as it were, the difference with theological precision, the censures of the church were levelled against such as should have the boldness to assert that the Virgin Mary had derived any taint from "her great ancestor;" and, having personified the *Immaculate Conception*, it was declared, that the Spanish dominions in Europe and America were under the protecting influence of that mysterious event.

This declaration diffused universal joy over the whole nation. It was celebrated with public rejoicings on both sides of the Atlantic. The king instituted an order distinguished by the emblem of the Immaculate Conception—a woman dressed in white and blue; and a law was enacted, requiring a declaration, upon oath, of a firm belief in the *Immaculate Conception*, from every individual, previous to his taking any degree at the universities, or being admitted into any of the corporations, civil and religious, which abound in Spain. This oath is administered even to mechanics upon their being made free of a Guild.*

Here, however, I must break off, for fear of making this packet too large for the confidential conveyance, to which alone I could trust it without great risk of finishing my task in one of the cells of the Holy Inquisition. I will not fail, however, to resume my subject as soon as circumstances permit me.

* See Note A, at the end of the Volume.

LETTER II.

Seville —— 1798

TO A. D. C. ESQ.

My Dear Sir—Your letter, acquainting me with Lady ——'s desire that you should take an active part in our correspondence on Spain, has increased my hopes of carrying on a work, which I feared would soon grow no less tiresome to our friend than to me. Objects which blend themselves with our daily habits are most apt to elude our observation; and will, like some dreams, fleet away through the mind, unless an accidental word or thought should set attention on the fast-fading track of their course. Nothing, therefore, can be of greater use to me than your queries, or help me so much as your observations.

You must excuse, however, my declining to give you a sketch of the national character of the Spaniards. I have always considered such descriptions as absolutely unmeaning—a mere assemblage of antitheses, where good and bad qualities are contrasted for effect, and with little foundation in na-

ture. No man's powers of observation can be, at once, so accurate and extensive, so minute and generalizing, as to be capable of embodying the peculiar features of millions into an abstract being, which shall contain traces of them all. Yet this is what most travellers attempt after a few weeks residence—what we are accustomed to expect from the time that a Geographical Grammar is first put into our hands. I shall not, therefore, attempt either abstraction or classification, but endeavour to collect as many facts as may enable others to perceive the general tendency of the civil and religious state of my country, and to judge of its influence on the improvement or degradation of this portion of mankind, independently of the endless modifications which arise from the circumstances, external and internal, of every individual. I will not overlook, however, the great divisions of society, and shall therefore acquaint you with the chief sources of distinction which both law and custom have established among us.

The most comprehensive division of the people of Spain is that of *nobles* and *plebeians*. But I must caution you against a mistaken notion which these words are apt to convey to an Englishman. In Spain, any person whose family, either by immemorial prescription, or by the king's patent, is entitled to exemption from some burdens, and to the enjoyment of certain privileges, belongs to the class of nobility. It appears to me that this distinction

originated in the allotment of a certain portion of ground in towns conquered from the Moors. In some patents of nobility—I cannot say whether they are all alike—the king, after an enumeration of the privileges and exemptions to which he raises the family, adds the general clause, that they shall be considered in all respects, as *Hidalgos de casa y solar conocido*—"*Hidalgos*, i. e. nobles (for the words are become synonymous) of a known family and *ground-plot*." Many of the exemptions attached to this class of Franklins, or inferior nobility, have been withdrawn in our times, not, however, without a distinct recognition of the *rank* of such as could claim them before the amendment of the law. But still a Spanish gentleman, or *Cavallero*—a name which expresses the privileged gentry in all its numerous and undefined gradations—cannot be ballotted for the militia; and none but an *Hidalgo* can enter the army as a cadet. In the routine of promotion, ten cadets, I believe, must receive a commission before a serjeant can have his turn--and even that is often passed over. Such as are fortunate enough to be raised from the ranks can seldom escape the reserve and slight of their prouder fellow-officers; and the common appellation of *Pinos*, "pine-trees" —alluding, probably, to the height required in a serjeant, like that of *freedman*, among the Romans, implies a stain which the first situations in the army cannot completely obliterate.

Noblesse, as I shall call it, to avoid an equivocal

term, descends from the father to all his male children, for ever. But though a female cannot transmit this privilege to her issue, her being the daughter of an *Hidalgo* is of absolute necessity to constitute what, in the language of the country, is called, "a nobleman on four sides"—*noble de quatro costados*: that is, a man whose parents, their parents, and their parents' parents, belonged to the privileged class. None but these *square noblemen* can receive the order of knighthood. But we are fallen on degenerate times, and I could name many a knight in this town who has been furnished with more than one *corner* by the dexterity of the *notaries*, who act as secretaries in collecting and drawing up the proofs and documents required on these occasions.

There exists another distinction of blood; which, I think, is peculiar to Spain, and to which the mass of the people are so blindly attached, that the meanest peasant looks upon the want of it as a source of misery and degradation, which he is doomed to transmit to his latest posterity. The least mixture of African, Indian, Moorish, or Jewish blood, taints a whole family to the most distant generation. Nor does the knowledge of such a fact die away in the course of years, or become unnoticed from the obscurity and humbleness of the parties. Not a child in this populous city is ignorant that a family, who, beyond the memory of man have kept a confectioner's shop in the central part of the town, had one of their ancestors punished by the Inquisition for

a relapse into Judaism. I well recollect how, when a boy, I often passed that way, scarcely venturing to cast a side glance on a pretty young woman who constantly attended the shop, for fear, as I said to myself, of shaming her. A person free from tainted blood is defined by law, "an old Christian, clean from all bad race and stain," *Christiano viejo, limpio de toda mala raza, y mancha.* The severity of this law, or rather of the public opinion enforcing it, shuts out its victims from every employment in church or state, and excludes them even from the *Fraternities*, or religious associations, which are otherwise open to persons of the lowest ranks. I verily believe, that were St. Peter a Spaniard, he would either deny admittance into heaven to people of tainted blood, or send them to a retired corner, where they might not offend the eyes of the *old Christians.*

But alas! what has been said of laws—and I believe it true in most countries, ancient and modern, except England—that they are like cobwebs, which entrap the weak, and yield to the strong and bold, is equally, and perhaps more generally applicable to public opinion. It is a fact, that many of the grandees, and the titled noblesse of this country, derive a large portion of their blood from Jews and Moriscoes. Their pedigree has been traced up to those cankered branches, in a manuscript book, which neither the threats of Government, nor the terrors of the Inquisition, have been able to sup-

press completely. It is called *Tizon de España*—"the Brand of Spain." But wealth and power have set opinion at defiance; and while a poor industrious man, humbled by feelings not unlike those of an Indian *Paria*, will hardly venture to salute his neighbour, because, forsooth, his fourth or fifth ancestor fell into the hands of the Inquisition for declining to eat pork—the proud grandee, perhaps a nearer descendant of the Patriarchs, will think himself degraded by marrying the first gentlewoman in the kingdom, unless she brings him *a hat*, in addition to the six or eight which he may be already entitled to wear before the king. But this requires some explanation.

The highest privilege of a grandee is that of covering his head before the king. Hence, by two or more *hats* in a family, it is meant that it has a right, by inheritance, to as many titles of grandeeship. Pride having confined the grandees to intermarriages in their own caste, and the estates and titles being inheritable by females, an enormous accumulation of property and honours has been made in a few hands. The chief aim of every family is constantly to increase this preposterous accumulation. Their children are married, by dispensation, in their infancy, to some great heir or heiress; and such is the multitude of family names and titles which every grandee claims and uses, that if you should look into a simple passport given by the Spanish Ambassador in London, when he happens to be a mem-

ber of the ancient Spanish families, you will find the whole first page of a large foolscap sheet, employed merely to tell you who the great man is whose signature is to close the whole. As far as vanity alone is concerned, this ambitious display of rank and parentage, might, at this time of day, be dismissed with a smile. But there lurks a more serious evil in the absurd and invidious system so studiously preserved by our first nobility. Surrounded by their own dependents, and avoided by the gentry, who are seldom disposed for an intercourse in which a sense of inferiority prevails, few of the grandees are exempt from the natural consequences of such a life—gross ignorance, intolerable conceit, and sometimes, though seldom, a strong dose of vulgarity. I would, however, be just, and by no means tax individuals with every vice of the class. But I believe I speak the prevalent sense of the country upon this point. The grandees have degraded themselves by their slavish behaviour at Court, and incurred great odium by their intolerable airs abroad. They have ruined their estates by mismanagement and extravagance, and impoverished the country by the neglect of their immense possessions. Should there be a revolution in Spain, wounded pride, and party spirit, would deny them the proper share of power in the constitution, to which their lands, their ancient rights, and their remaining influence entitle them. Thus excluded from their chief and peculiar duty of keeping the

balance of power between the throne and the people, the Spanish grandees will remain a heavy burthen on the nation; while, either fearing for their overgrown privileges, or impatient under reforms which must fall chiefly on them and the clergy, they will always be inclined to join the crown in restoring the abuses of arbitrary government.

Would to Heaven that an opportunity presented itself for re-modelling our constitution after the only political system which has been sanctioned by the experience of ages—I mean your own. We have nearly the same elements in existence; and low and degraded as we are by the baneful influence of despotism, we might yet by a proper combination of our political forces, lay down the basis of a permanent and improvable free constitution. But I greatly fear that we have been too long in chains, to make the best use of the first moments of liberty. Perhaps the crown, as well as the classes of grandees and bishops, will be suffered to exist, from want of power in the popular party; but they will be made worse than useless through neglect and jealousy. I am neither what you call a tory nor a bigot; nor am I inditing a prophetic elegy on the diminished glories of crowns, coronets and mitres. A levelling spirit I detest indeed, and from my heart do I abhor every sort of spoliation. Many years, however, must pass, and strange events take place, before any such evils can threaten this country. Spanish despotism is

not of that insulting and irritating nature which drives a whole people to madness. It is not the despotism of the taskmaster whose lash sows vengeance in the hearts of his slaves. It is the cautious forecast of the husbandman who mutilates the cattle whose strength he fears. The degraded animal grows up, unconscious of the injury, and after a short training, one might think he comes at last to love the yoke. Such, I believe, is our state. Taxes, among us, are rather ill-contrived than grinding; and millions of the lower classes are not aware of the share they contribute. They all love their king, however they may dislike the exciseman. Seigneurial rights are hardly in existence: and both gentry and peasantry find little to remind them of the exorbitant power which the improvident and slothful life of the grandees, at court, allows to lie dormant and wasting in their hands. The majority of the nation are more inclined to despise than to hate them; and though few men would lift up a finger to support their rights, fewer still would imitate the French in carrying fire and sword to their mansions.

For bishops and their spiritual power *Juan Español** has as greedy and capacious a stomach, as *John Bull* for roast beaf and ale. One single class of people feels galled and restless, and that unfortunately neither is, nor can be, numerous in

* A name denoting the plain unsophisticated Spaniard.

this country. The class I mean consists of such as are able to perceive the encroachments of tyranny on their intellectual rights—whose pride of mind, and consciousness of mental strength, cause them to groan and fret, daily and hourly, under the necessity of keeping within the miry and crooked paths to which ignorance and superstition have confined the active souls of the Spaniards. But these, compared with the bulk of the nation, are but a mere handful. Yet, they may, under favourable circumstances, recruit and augment their forces with the ambitious of all classes. They will have, at first, to disguise their views, to conceal their favourite doctrines, and even to cherish those national prejudices, which, were their real views known, would crush them to atoms. The mass of the people may acquiesce for a time in the new order of things, partly from a vague desire of change and improvement, partly from the passive political habits which a dull and deadening despotism has bred and rooted in the course of ages. The army may cast the decisive weight of the sword on the popular side of the balance, as long as it suits its views. But if the church and the great nobility are neglected in the distribution of legislative power—if, instead of alluring them into the path of liberty with the sweet bait of *constitutional* influence, they are only alarmed for their rights and privileges, without a hope of compensation, they may be shovelled and heaped aside, like a mountain of dead and inert

sand; but they will stand, in their massive and ponderous indolence, ready to slide down at every moment, and bury the small active party below, upon the least division of their strength. A house, or chamber of peers, composed of grandees in their own right—that is, not, as is done at present, by the transfer of one of the titles accumulated in the same family—of the bishops, and of a certain number of law lords regularly chosen from the supreme court of judicature (a measure of the greatest importance to discourage the distinction of *blood*, which is, perhaps, the worst evil in the present state of the great Spanish nobility), might, indeed, check the work of reformation to a slower pace than accords with the natural eagerness of a popular party. But the legislative body would possess a regulator within itself, which would faithfully mark the gradual capacity for improvement in the nation. The members of the privileged chamber would themselves be improved and enlightened by the exercise of constitutional power, and the pervading influence of public discussion: while, should they be overlooked in any future attempt at a free constitution, they will, like a diseased and neglected limb, spread infection over the whole body, or, at last, expose it to the hazard of a bloody and dangerous amputation. But it is time to return to our *Hidalgos*.

As the *Hidalguia* branches out through every

male whose father enjoys that privilege, Spain is overrun with *gentry*, who earn their living in the meanest employments. The province of Asturias having afforded shelter to that small portion of the nation which preserved the Spanish name and throne against the efforts of the conquering Arabs; there is hardly a native of that mountainous tract, who, even at this day, cannot shew a legal title to honours and immunities gained by his ancestors, at a time when every soldier had either a share in the territory recovered from the invaders, or was rewarded with a perpetual exemption from such taxes and services as fell exclusively upon the *simple** peasantry. The numerous assertors of these privileges among the Asturians of the present day, lead me to think that in the earliest times of the Spanish monarchy every soldier was raised to the rank of a Franklin. But circumstances are strangely altered. Asturias is one of the poorest provinces of Spain, and the *noble* inhabitants having, for the most part, inherited no other patrimony from their ancestors than a strong muscular frame, are compelled to make the best of it among the more feeble tribes of the south. In this capital of Andalusia they have engrossed the employments of watermen,

* *Gentle* and *simple*, as I find in those inexhaustible sources of intellectual delight, the Novels by the author of "Waverley," are used by the Scottish peasants in the same manner as *Noble*, and *Llano*, (plain, simple) by the Spaniards.

porters, and footmen. Those belonging to the two first classes are formed into a *fraternity*, whose members have a right to the exclusive use of a chapel in the cathedral. The privilege which they value most, however, is that of affording the twenty stoutest men to convey the moveable stage on which the consecrated host is paraded in public, on Corpus Christi day, enshrined in a small temple of massive silver. The bearers are concealed behind rich gold-cloth hangings, which reach the ground on the four sides of the stage. The weight of the whole machine is enormous; yet these twenty men bear it on the hind part of the head and neck, moving with such astonishing ease and regularity, as if the motion arose from the impulse of steam, or some steady mechanical power.

While these *Gentlemen Hidalgos* are employed in such ungentle services, though the law allows them the exemptions of their class, public opinion confines them to their natural level. The only chance for any of these disguised *noblemen* to be publicly treated with due honour and deference is, unfortunately, one for which they feel an unconquerable aversion—that of being delivered into the rude hands of a Spanish *Jack Ketch*. We had here, two years ago, an instance of this, which I shall relate, as being highly characteristic of our national prejudices about blood.

A gang of five banditti was taken within the

jurisdiction of this *Audiencia*, or chief court of justice, one of whom, though born and brought up among the lowest ranks of society, was, by family, an *Hidalgo*, and had some relations among the better class of gentlemen. I believe the name of the unfortunate man was *Herrera*, and that he was a native of a town about thirty English miles from Seville, called *el Arahal*. But I have not, at present, the means of ascertaining the accuracy of these particulars. After lingering, as usual, four or five years in prison, these unfortunate men were found guilty of several murders and highway robberies, and sentenced to suffer death. The relations of the *Hidalgo*, who, foreseeing this fatal event, had been watching the progress of the trial, in order to step forward just in time to avert the stain which a cousin, in the second or third remove, would cast upon their family, if he died in mid-air like a villain; presented a petition to the judges, accompanied with the requisite documents, claiming for their relative the honours of his rank, and engaging to pay the expenses attending the execution of a *nobleman*. The petition being granted as a matter of course, the following scene took place.. At a short distance from the gallows on which the four *simple* robbers were to be hanged in a cluster, from the central point of the cross beam, all dressed in white shrouds, with their hands tied before them, that the hangman, who actually rides upon the

shoulders of the criminal, may place his foot as in a stirrup,*—was raised a scaffold about ten feet high, on an area of about fifteen by twenty, the whole of which and down to the ground, on all sides, was covered with black baize. In the centre of the scaffold was erected a sort of arm-chair, with a stake for its back, against which, by means of an iron collar attached to a screw, the neck is crushed by one turn of the handle. This machine is called *Garrote*—" a stick"—from the old-fashioned method of strangling, by twisting the fatal cord with a stick. Two flights of steps on opposite sides of the stage, afforded a separate access, one for the criminal and the priest, the other for the executioner and his attendant.

The convict, dressed in a loose gown of black baize, rode on a horse, a mark of distinction peculiar to his class, (plebeians riding on an ass, or being dragged on a hurdle,) attended by a priest, and a notary, and surrounded by soldiers. Black silk cords were prepared to bind him to the arms of the seat; for ropes are thought dishonourable. After kneeling to receive the last absolution from the priest, he took off a ring, with which the unfortunate man had been provided for that melancholy occasion. According to etiquette he should have disdainfully thrown it down for the execu-

* The Cortes have abolished this barbarous method of inflicting death.

tioner; but, as a mark of Christian humility, he put it into his hand. The sentence being executed, four silver candlesticks, five feet high, with burning wax-candles of a proportionate length and thickness, were placed at the corners of the scaffold; and in about three hours, a suitable funeral was conducted by the *posthumous* friends of the noble robber, who, had they assisted him to settle in life with half of what they spent in this absurd and disgusting show, might, perhaps have saved him from his fatal end. But these honours being what is called *a positive act of noblesse*, of which a due certificate is given to the surviving parties, to be recorded among the legal proofs of their rank; they may have acted under the idea that their relative was fit only to add lustre to the family by the close of his career.

The innumerable and fanciful gradations of family rank which the Spaniards have formed to themselves, without the least foundation in the laws of the country, are difficult to describe. Though the *Hidalguia* is a necessary qualification, especially in country towns, to be admitted into the best society, it is by no means sufficient, by itself, to raise the views of every *Hidalgo* to a family connexion with the "blue blood"—*sangre azul* of the country. The shades by which the vital fluid approaches this privileged hue, would perplex the best colourist. These prejudices, however, have lost much of their force at Madrid, except

among the grandees, and in such maritime towns as Malaga and Cadiz, where commerce has raised many new, ahd some foreign families into consequence. But there is a pervading spirit of vanity in the nation, which actuates even the lowest classes, and may be discovered in the evident mortification which menials and mechanics are apt to feel, on the omission of some modes of address intended, as it were, to cast a veil on the humbleness of their condition. To call a man by the name of *blacksmith*, *butcher*, *coachman*, would be considered an insult. They all expect to be called either by their Christian name, or by the general appellation *Maestro* and in both cases with the prefixed *Senor;* unless the word expressing the employment should imply superiority: as *Mayoral*, chief coachman — *Rabadan*, chief shepherd—*Aperador*, bailiff. These, and similar names, are used without an addition, and sound well in the ears of the natives. But no female would suffer herself to be addressed *cook*, *washer-woman*, &c.; they all feel and act as if, having a natural claim to a higher rank, misfortune alone had degraded them. Poverty, unless it be extreme, does not disqualify a man of family for the society of his equals. Secular clergymen, though plebeians, are, generally, well received; but the same indulgence is not readily extended to monks and friars, whose unpolished manners betray too openly the meanness of their birth. Wholesale merchants, if they belong to the class of *Hidalgos*, are not

avoided by the great gentry. In the law, *attorneys* and *notaries* are considered to be under the line of *Cavalleros*, though their rank, as in England, depends a great deal on their wealth and personal respectability. Physicians are nearly in the same case.

Having now made you acquainted with what is here called the *best sort* of people, you will probably like to have a sketch of their daily life: take it, then, neither from the first, nor the last of the class.

Breakfast, in Spain, is not a regular family meal. It generally consists of chocolate, and buttered toast, or muffins, called *molletes*. Irish salt-butter is very much in use; as the heat of the climate does not allow the luxuries of the dairy, except in the mountainous tracts of the north. Every one calls for chocolate whenever it suits him; and most people take it when they come from mass—a ceremony seldom omitted, even by such as cannot be reckoned among the highly religious. After breakfast, the gentlemen repair to their occupations; and the ladies, who seldom call upon one another, often enjoy the *amusement* of music and a sermon at the church appointed on that day for the public adoration of the Consecrated Host, which, from morning till night, takes place throughout the year in this, and a few other large towns. This is called *el jubileo*—the jubilee; as, by a spiritual grant of the Pope, those who visit the appointed church, are entitled to the plenary indul-

gence which, in former times, rewarded the trouble and dangers of a journey to Rome, on the first year of every century—a poor substitute, indeed, for the *ludi sæculares,* which, in former times, drew people thither from all parts of the Roman empire The bait, however, was so successful for a time, that *jubilees* were celebrated every twenty-five years. But when the taste for papal indulgences began to be cloyed by excess, few would move a foot, and much less undertake a long journey, to spend their money for the benefit of the Pope and his Roman subjects. In these desperate circumstances, the Holy Father thought it better to send the *jubilee,* with its plenary indulgence, to the distant sheep of his flock, than to wait in vain for their coming to seek it at Rome. To this effort of pastoral generosity we owe the inestimable advantage of being able, every day, to perform a spiritual visit to St. Peter's at Rome; which, to those who are indifferent about architectural beauty, is infinitely cheaper, and just as profitable, as a pilgrimage to the vicinity of the Capitol.

About noon the ladies are at home, where, employed at their needle, they expect the morning calls of their friends. I have already told you how easy it is for a gentleman to gain an introduction to any family: the slightest occasion will produce what is called *an offer of the house,* when you are literally told that the house *is yours.* Upon the strength of this offer, you may drop in as often as

you please, and idle away hour after hour, in the most unmeaning, or it may chance, the most interesting conversation.

The mention of this offer of the house induces me to give you some idea of the hyperbolical civility of my countrymen. When an English nobleman, well known both to you and me, was some years ago travelling in this country, he wished to spend a fortnight at Barcelona; but, the inn being rather uncomfortable for himself and family, he was desirous of procuring a country-house in the neighbourhood of the town. It happened at this time that a rich merchant, for whom our friend had a letter, called to pay his respects; and in a string of high-flown compliments, assured his Lordship that both his town-house and his villa were entirely at his service. My lady's eyes sparkled with joy, and she was rather vexed that her husband had hesitated a moment to secure the villa for his family. Doubts arose as to the sincerity of the offer, but she could not be persuaded that such forms of expression should be taken, in this country, in the same sense as the—"Madam I am at your feet,"—with which every gentleman addresses a lady. After all, the merchant, no doubt, to his great astonishment, received a very civil note, accepting the loan of his country house. But, in answer to the note, he sent an awkward excuse, and never shewed his face again. The poor man was so far from being to blame, that he only followed the

established custom of the country, according to which it would be rudeness not to offer any part of your property, which you either mention or show. Fortunately, Spanish etiquette is just and equitable on this point; for as it would not pardon the omission of the offer, so it would never forgive the acceptance.

A foreigner must be surprised at the strange mixture of caution and liberty which appears in the manners of Spain. Most rooms have glass doors; but when this is not the case, it would be highly improper for any lady to sit with a gentleman, unless the doors were open. Yet, when a lady is slightly indisposed in bed, she does not scruple to see every one of her male visitors. A lady seldom takes a gentleman's arm, and never shakes him by the hand; but on the return of an old acquaintance after a considerable absence, or when they wish joy for some agreeable event, the common salute is an embrace. An unmarried woman must not be seen alone out of doors, nor must she sit *tête-à-tête* with a gentleman, even when the doors of the room are open; but, as soon as she is married, she may go by herself where she pleases, and sit alone with any man for many hours every day. You have in England strange notions of Spanish jealousy. I can, however, assure you, that if Spanish husbands were, at any time, what novels and old plays represent them, no race in Europe has undergone a more thorough change.

Dinners are generally at one, and in a few houses, between two and three. Invitations to dine are extremely rare. On some extraordinary occasions, as that of a young man performing his first mass—a daughter taking the veil—and, in the more wealthy houses, on the saint-days of the heads of the family, they make what is called a *convite*, or feast. Any person accustomed to your private dinners, would be thrown into a fever by one of these parties. The height of luxury, on these occasions, is what we call *Comida de Fonda*—a dinner from the coffee-house. All the dishes are dressed at an inn, and brought ready to be served at table. The Spanish houses, even those of the best sort, are so ill provided with every thing required at table, that wine, plates, glasses, knives and forks, are brought from the inn together with the dinner. The noise and confusion of these *feasts* is inconceivable. Every one tries to repay the hospitable treat with mirth and noise; and though Spaniards are, commonly, water-drinkers, the bottle is used very freely on these occasions; but they do not continue at table after eating the dessert. Upon the death of any one in a family, the nearest relatives send a dinner of this kind, on the day of the funeral, that they may save the chief mourners the trouble of preparing an entertainment for such of their kindred as have attended the body to church. Decorum, however, forbids any mirth on these occasions.

After I became acquainted with English hospita-

lity, my mind was struck with a custom, which, being a matter of course in Spain, had never attracted my notice. An invitation to dinner, which, by the by, is never given in writing, must not be accepted on the first proposal. Perhaps our complimentary language makes it necessary to ascertain how far the inviter may be in earnest, and a good-natured civility has made it a rule to give national vanity fair play, and never, without proper caution, to trust *pot-luck*, where fortune so seldom smiles upon that venerable utensil. The first invitation "to eat the soup" should be answered, therefore, with "a thousand thanks;" by which a Spaniard civilly declines what no one wishes him to accept. If, after this skirmish of good breeding, the offer should be repeated, you may begin to suspect that your friend is in earnest, and answer him in the usual words, *no se meta Usted en eso*—"do not engage in such a thing." At this stage of the business, both parties having gone too far to recede, the invitation is repeated and accepted.

I might, probably, have omitted the mention of this custom, had I not found, as it appears to me, a curious coincidence between Spanish and ancient Greek manners on this point. Perhaps you recollect that Xenophon opens his little work called "The Banquet," by stating how Socrates and his pupils, who formed the greater part of the company the entertainment therein described; were invited by Callias, a rich citizen of Athens. The feast was

intended to celebrate the victory of a young man, who had obtained the crown at the Panathenæan games. Callias was walking home with his young friend to the Pireus, when he saw Socrates and his daily companions. He accosted the former in a familiar and playful manner, and, after a little bantering on his philosophical speculations, requested both him and his friends to give him the pleasure of their company at table. " They, however," says Xenophon, " *at first, as was proper*, thanked him, and declined the invitation ; *but when it clearly appeared that he was angry at the refusal*, followed him." I am aware that the words in Xenophon admit another interpretation, and that the phrase which I render, *as was proper*, may be applied to the *thanks* alone ; but it may be referred, with as much or better reason, both to thanks and refusal, and the custom which I have stated inclines me strongly to adopt that sense.* The truth is, that wherever dinner is not, as in England, the chief and almost exclusive season of social converse, an invitation to dine must appear somewhat in the light of a gift or present—which every man of delicacy feels reluctant to accept at all from a mere acquaintance, or without some degree of compulsion, from a friend. Besides, we know the abuse and ridicule with which both Greeks and Romans attacked the *Parasites*, or dinner-hunters ; and it

* See note B.

is very natural to suppose that a true gentleman would be upon his guard against the most distant resemblance to those unfortunate starvelings.

The custom of sleeping after dinner, called *Siesta*, is universal in summer, especially in Andalusia, where the intenseness of the heat produces languor and drowsiness. In winter, taking a walk, just after rising from table, is very prevalent. Many gentlemen, previously to their afternoon walk, resort to the coffee-houses, which now begin to be in fashion.

Almost every considerable town of Spain is provided with a public walk, where the better classes assemble in the afternoon. These places are called *Alamedas*, from *Alamo*, a common name for the elm and poplar, the trees which shade such places. Large stone benches run in the direction of the alleys, where people sit either to rest themselves or to carry on a long talk, in whispers, with the next lady; an amusement which, in the idiom of the country, is expressed by the strange phrase, *pelar la Pava*—"to pluck the hen-turkey." We have in our *Alameda* several fountains of the most delicious water. No less than twenty or thirty men with glasses, each holding nearly a quart, move in every direction, so dextrously clashing two of them in their hands, that without any danger of breaking them, they keep up a pretty lively tinkling like that of well-tuned small bells. So great is

the quantity of water which these people sell to the frequenters of the walk, that most of them live throughout the year on what they thus earn in summer. Success in this trade depends on their promptitude to answer every call, their neatness in washing the glasses, and most of all, on their skilful use of the good-natured waggery peculiar to the lower classes of Andalusia. A knowing air, an arch smile, and some honied words of praise and endearments, as "My rose," "My soul," and many others, which even a modest and high-bred lady will hear without displeasure ; are infallible means of success among tradesmen who deal with the public at large, and especially with the more tender part of that public. The company in these walks presents a motley crowd of officers in their regimentals, —of clergymen in their cassocks, black cloaks, and brood-brimmed hats, not unlike those of the coalmen in London,—and of gentlemen wrapped up in their *capas*, or in some uniform, without which a well-born Spaniard is almost ashamed to shew himself.

The ladies' walking-dress is susceptible of little variety. Nothing short of the house being on fire would oblige a Spanish woman to step out of doors without a black petticoat, called *Basquiña*, or *Saya*, and a broad black veil, hanging from the head over the shoulders, and crossed on the breast like a shawl, which they call *Mantilla*. The *mantilla* is, generally, of silk trimmed round with broad lace. In

summer-evenings some white *mantillas* are seen; but no lady would wear them in the morning, and much less venture into a church in such a *profane* dress.

A showy fan is indispensable, in all seasons, both in and out of doors. An Andalusian woman might as well want her tongue as her fan. The fan, besides, has this advantage over the natural organ of speech—that it conveys thought to a greater distance. A dear friend at the farthest end of the public walk, is greeted and cheered by a quick, tremulous motion of the fan, accompanied with several significant nods. An object of indifference is dismissed with a slow, formal inclination of the fan, which makes his blood run cold. The fan, now, screens the titter and whisper; now condenses a smile into the dark sparkling eyes, which take their aim just above it. A gentle tap of the fan commands the attention of the careless; a waving motion calls the distant. A certain twirl between the fingers betrays doubt or anxiety—a quick closing and displaying the folds, indicates eagerness or joy. In perfect combination with the expressive features of my countrywomen, the fan is a magic wand, whose power is more easily felt than described.

What is mere beauty, compared with the fascinating power arising from extreme sensibility? Such as are alive to those invisible charms, will hardly find a plain face among the young women of Andalusia.

Their features may not, at first view, please the eye; but seem to improve every day till they grow beautiful. Without the advantages of education, without even external accomplishments, the vivacity of their fancy sheds a perpetual glow over their conversation; and the warmth of their heart gives the interest of affection to their most indifferent actions. But Nature, like a too fond mother, has spoilt them, and Superstition has completed their ruin. While the activity of their minds is allowed to run waste for want of care and instruction, the consciousness of their powers to please, impresses them with an early notion that life has but one source of happiness. Were their charms the effect of that cold twinkling flame which flutters round the hearts of most Frenchwomen, they would be only dangerous to the peace and usefulness of one half of society. But, instead of being the capricious tyrants of men, they are, generally, their victims. Few, very few Spanish women, and none, I will venture to say, among the Andalusians, have it in their power to be coquettes. If it may be said without a solecism, there is more of that vice in our men than in our females. The first, leading a life of idleness, and deprived by an ignorant, oppressive, and superstitious government, of every object that can raise and feed an honest ambition, waste their whole youth, and part of their manly age, in trifling with the best feelings of the tender sex, and poisoning, for mere mischief's sake, the very

springs of domestic happiness. But our's is the most dire and complex disease that ever preyed upon the vitals of human society. With some of the noblest qualities that a people can possess (you will excuse an involuntary burst of national partiality), we are worse than degraded—we are depraved, by that which is intended to cherish and exalt every social virtue. Our corrupters, our mortal enemies, are religion and government. To set the practical proofs of this bold position in a striking light is, undoubtedly, beyond my abilities. Yet such, I must say, is the force of the proofs I possess on this melancholy topic, that they nearly overcome my mind with intuitive evidence. Let me, then, take leave of the subject into which my feelings have hurried me, by assuring you, that wherever the slightest aid is afforded to the female mind in this country, it exhibits the most astonishing quickness and capacity; and that, probably, no other nation in the world can present more lovely instances of a glowing and susceptible heart preserving unspotted purity, not from the dread of public opinion, but in spite of its encouragements.

LETTER III.

Seville, —— 1799.

FORTUNE has favoured me with an acquaintance —a young clergyman of this town—for whom, since our first introduction, I have felt a growing esteem, such as must soon ripen into the warmest affection. Common danger, and common suffering, especially of the mind, prove often the readiest and most indissoluble bonds of human friendship: and when to this influence is added the blending power of an intercommunity of thoughts and sentiments, no less unbounded than the confidence with which two men put thereby their liberty, their fortune, and their life into the hands of each other—imagination can hardly measure the warmth and devotedness of honest hearts thus united.

Spaniards, who have broken the trammels of superstition, possess a wonderful quickness to mark and know one another. Yet caution is so necessary, that we never offer the right hand of fellowship

till, by gradual approaches, the heart and mind are carefully scanned on both sides. There are *bullies* in mental no less than in animal courage: and I have sometimes been in danger of committing myself with a pompous fool that was hazarding propositions in the evening, which he was sure to lay, in helpless fear, before the confessor, the next morning; and who, had he met with free and unqualified assent from any one of the company, would have tried to save his own soul and body by carrying the whole conversation to the Inquisitors. But the character of my new friend was visible at a glance; and, after some conversation, I could not feel the slightest apprehension that there might lurk in his heart either the villainly or the folly which can betray a man, in this world, under a pretext of ensuring his happiness in the next. He too, either from the circumstance of my long residence in England, or, as I hope, from something more properly belonging to myself, soon opened his whole mind; and we both uttered downright *heresy*. After this mutual, this awful pledge, the Scythian ceremony of tasting each other's blood could not have more closely bound us in interest and danger.

The coolness of an orange-grove is not more refreshing to him who has panted across one of our burning plains, under the meridian sun in August, than the company of a few trusty friends to some unbending minds, after a long day of restraint and dissimulation. When after our evening walk we are at

last comfortably seated round my friend's reading-table, where an amiable young officer, another clergyman, and one of the most worthy and highly-gifted men that tyranny and superstition have condemned to pine in obscurity, are always welcomed with a cordiality approaching to rapture—I cannot help comparing our feelings to those which we might suppose in Christian slaves at Algiers, who, having secretly unlocked the rivets of their fetters, could shake them off to feast and riot in the dead of night, cheering their hearts with wild visions of liberty, and salving their wounds with vague hopes of revenge. Revenge, did I say! what a false notion would that word give you of the characters that compose our little club! I doubt if Nature herself could so undo the work of her hands as to transform any one of my kind, my benevolent friends, into a man of blood. As to myself, mere protestations were useless. You know me; and I shall leave you to judge. But there is a revenge of the fancy, perfectly consistent with true mildness and generosity, though certainly more allied to quick sensibility than to sound and sober judgment. The last, however, should be seldom, if at all, looked for among persons in our circumstances. Our childhood is artificially protracted till we wonder how we have grown old: and, being kept at an immeasurable distance from the affairs and interest of public life, our passions, our virtues, and our vices, like those of early youth, have deeper roots in the

imagination than the heart. I will not say that this is a prevalent feature in the character of my countrymen ; but I have generally observed it among the best and the worthiest. As to my confidential friends, especially the one I mentioned at the beginning of this letter, in strict conformity with the temper which, I fear, I have but imperfectly described, they spend their lives in giving vent, among themselves, to the suppressed feelings of ridicule or indignation, of which the religious institutions of this country are a perennial source to those who are compelled to receive them as of Divine authority. England has so far improved me, that I can perceive the folly of this conduct. I am aware that, instead of indulging this childish gratification of our anger, we should be preparing ourselves, by a profound study of our ancient laws and customs, and a perfect acquaintance with the pure and original doctrines of the Gospel, for any future opening to reformation in our church and state. But under this intolerable system of intellectual oppression, we have associated the idea of Spanish law with despotism, and that of Christianity with absurdity and persecution. After my return from England I feel almost involuntarily relapsing into the old habits of my mind. With my friends, who have never left this country, any endeavour to break and counteract such habits would be perfectly hopeless. Despondency drives them into a course of reading and thinking, which leads only to

suppressed contempt and whispered sarcasm. The violence which they must constantly do to their best feelings, might breed some of the fiercer passions in breasts less softened with "the milk of human kindness." But their hatred of the prevailing practices and opinions does not extend to persons. Yet I for one must confess, that were I to act from a first and habitual impulse, without listening to my better judgment, there is not a saint or a relic in the country I would not trample under foot, and treat with the utmost indignity. As things are, however, I content myself with scoffing and railing the whole day. But I trust that, on a change of circumstances, I should act more soberly than I feel.

I should have found it very difficult, without this fortunate intimacy with a man who, though still in the prime of youth, has lately obtained, by literary competition, a place among what we call the higher clergy—that is, such as are *above* the cure of souls—to give you an insight into the internal constitution of the Spanish church, the vices of the system which prepares our young men for the altar, and the ruinous foundations on which the ecclesiastical law, aided by civil power, hazards the morals of our religious teachers and their flocks. When I had expressed to my friend my desire of having his assistance in carrying on this correspondence, as well as satisfied his mind on the improbability of any thing entrusted to you, recoiling

upon himself in Spain; he shewed me a manuscript he had drawn up some time before, under the title: "A few facts connected with the formation of the intellectual and moral character of a Spanish Clergyman." "Who knows," he said, "but that this sketch may answer your purpose? No traveller's-guide account of our universities and clerical establishments, can convey such a living picture of our state, as the history of a young mind trained up under their influence. You might easily find a list of the professors, endowments, and class-books of which the framework of Spanish education consists. But who would have the patience to read it, or what could he learn from it? I had intended that this little effusion of an oppressed and struggling mind should lie concealed till some future period, probably after my death, when my country might be prepared to learn and lament the wrongs she has, for ages, heaped on her children. But, since you have provided against discovery, and are willing to translate into English any thing I may give you, it will be some satisfaction to know that the results of my sad experience are laid before the most enlightened and benevolent people of Europe. Perhaps, if they know the true source of our evils, the day will come when they may be able and willing to help us."

The question with me now was, not whether I should accept the manuscript, but whether I *could* do it justice in the translation. Trusting, however,

that the novelty of the matter would atone for the faults of my style; labour and perseverance have, at length, enabled me to enclose it in this letter. As I have thus introduced a stranger to you. I am bound in common civility to fall into the background, and let him speak for himself.

A few Facts connected with the formation of the Intellectual and Moral Character of a Spanish Clergyman.

"I do not possess the cynical habits of mind which would enable me, like Rousseau, to expose my heart naked to the gaze of the world. I have neither his unfortunate and odious propensities to gloss by an affected candour, nor his bewitching eloquence to display, whatever good qualities I may possess: and as I must overcome no small reluctance and fear of impropriety, to enter upon the task of writing an account of the workings of my mind and heart, I have some reason to believe that I am led to do so by a sincere desire of being useful to others. Millions of human creatures are made to venture their happiness on a form of Christianity which possesses the strongest claims to our attention, both from its great antiquity, and the extent of its

sway over the most civilized part of the earth. The various effects of that religious system, unmixed with any thing unauthorized or spurious, upon my country, my friends, and myself, have been the object of my most serious attention, from the very dawn of reason till the moment when I am writing these lines. If the result of my experience should be, that religion, as it is taught and enforced in Spain, is productive of exquisite misery in the amiable and good, and of gross depravity in the unfeeling and the thoughtless—that it is an insuperable obstacle to the improvement of the mind, and gives a decided ascendancy to lettered absurdity, and to dull-headed bigotry—that it necessarily breeds such reserve and dissimulation in the most promising and valuable part of the people as must check and stunt the noblest of public virtues, candour and political courage—if all this, and much more that I am not able to express in the abstract form of simple positions, should start into view from the plain narrative of an obscure individual; I hope I shall not be charged with the silly vanity of attributing any intrinsic importance to the domestic events and private feelings which are to fill up the following pages.

"I was born of parents who, though possessed of little property, held a decent rank among the gentry of my native town. Their characters, however, are so intimately connected with the forma-

tion of my own, that I shall indulge an honest pride in describing them.

"My father was the son of a rich Irish merchant, who obtained for himself and descendants a patent of *Hidalguia*, or noblesse, early in the reign of Ferdinand VI. During the life of my grandfather, and the consequent prosperity of his house, my father was sent abroad for his education. This gave a polish to his manners, which, at that period, was not easily found even in the first ranks of the nobility. Little more than accomplishments, however, was left him, when, in consequence of his father's death, the commercial concerns of the house being managed by a stranger, received a shock which had nearly reduced the family to poverty and want. Yet something was saved; and my father, who, by some unaccountable infatuation, had not been brought up to business, was now obliged to exert himself to the utmost of his power. Joining, therefore, in partnership with a more wealthy merchant, who had married one of his sisters, he contrived, by care and diligence, together with a strict, though not sordid economy, not to descend below the rank in which he had been born. Under these unpromising circumstances he married my mother, who, if she could add but little to her husband's fortune, yet brought him a treasure of love and virtue, which he found constantly increasing, till death removed him on the first approaches of old age.

"My mother was of honourable parentage. She was brought up in that absence of mental cultivation which prevails, to this day, among the Spanish ladies. But her natural talents were of a superior cast. She was lively, pretty, and sang sweetly. Under the influence of a happier country, her pleasing vivacity, the quickness of her apprehension, and the exquisite degree of sensibility which animated her words and actions, would have qualified her to shine in the most elegant and refined circles.

Benevolence prompted all my father's actions, endued him, at times, with something like supernatural vigour, and gave him, for the good of his fellow-creatures, the courage and decision he wanted in whatever concerned himself. With hardly any thing to spare, I do not recollect a time when our house was not a source of relief and consolation to some families of such as, by a characteristic and feeling appellation, are called among us the *blushing poor*.* In all seasons, for thirty years of his life, my father allowed himself no other relaxation, after the fatiguing business of his counting-house, than a visit to the general hospital of this town—a horrible scene of misery, where four or five hundred beggars are, at a time, allowed to lay themselves down and die, when worn out by want and disease. Stripping himself of his coat, and having put on a coarse dress for the sake of cleanliness, in

* *Pobres vergonzantes.*

which he was scrupulous to a fault; he was employed, till late at night, in making the beds of the poor, taking the helpless in his arms, and stooping to such services as even the menials in attendance were often loth to perform. All this he did of his own free will, without the least connexion, public or private, with the establishment. Twice he was at death's door from the contagious influence of the atmosphere in which he exerted his charity. But no danger would appal him when engaged in administering relief to the needy. Foreigners, cast by misfortune into that gulf of wretchedness, were the peculiar objects of his kindness.

"The principle of benevolence was not less powerful in my mother; but her extreme sensibility made her infinitely more susceptible of pain than pleasure—of fear than hope—and, for such characters, a technical religion is ever a source of distracting terrors. Enthusiasm—that bastard of religious liberty, that vigorous weed of Protestantism—does not thrive under the jealous eye of infallible authority. Catholicism, it is true, has, in a few instances, produced a sort of splendid madness; but its visions and trances partake largely of the tameness of a mind previously exhausted by fears and agonies, meekly borne under the authority of a priest. The throes of the New Birth harrow up the mind of the Methodist, and give it that frenzied energy of despair, which often settles into the all-hoping, all-daring raptures of the enthusiast. The

Catholic Saint suffers in all the passiveness of blind submission, till nature sinks exhausted, and reason gives way to a gentle, visionary madness. The natural powers of my mother's intellect were strong enough to withstand, unimpaired, the enormous and constant pressure of religious fears in their most hideous shape. But, did I not deem reason the only gift of Heaven which fully compensates the evils of this present existence, I might have wished for its utter extinction in the first and dearest object of my natural affection. Had she become a visionary, she had ceased to be unhappy. But she possessed to the last an intellectual energy equal to any exertion, except one, which was not compatible with the influence of her country—that of looking boldly into the dark recess where lurked the phantoms that harassed and distressed her mind.

"It would be difficult, indeed, to choose two fairer subjects for observing the effects of the religion of Spain. The results, in both, were lamentable, though certainly not the most mischievous it is apt to produce. In one, we see mental soberness and good sense degraded into timidity and indecision—unbounded goodness of heart, confined to the lowest range of benevolence. In the other, we mark talents of a superior kind, turned into the ingenious tormentors of a heart, whose main source of wretchedness was an exquisite sensibility to the beauty of virtue, and an insatiate ardour in treading the devious and thorny path it was made to take

for the 'way which leadeth unto life.' — A bolder reason, in the first, (it will be said) and a reason less fluttered by sensibility, in the second, would have made those virtuous minds more cautious of yielding themselves up to the full influence of ascetic devotion. Is this, then, all that men are to expect from the unbounded promises of light, and the lofty claims of authority, which our religion holds forth? Is it thus, that, when, to obtain the protection of an infallible guide, we have, at his command, maimed and fast bound our reason, still a precipice yawns before our feet, from which none but that insulted reason can save us? Are we to call for her aid on the brink of despair and insanity, and then spurn our faithful, though injured friend, lest she should unlock our hand from that of our proud and treacherous leader? Often have I, from education, habit, and a misguided love of moral excellence, been guilty of that inconsistency, till frequent disappointment urged me to break my chains. Painful, indeed, and fierce was the struggle by which I gained my liberty, and doomed I am for ever to bear the marks of early bondage. But no power on earth shall make me again give up the guidance of my reason, till I can find a rule of conduct and belief that may safely be trusted, without wanting *reason* itself to moderate and expound it.

"The first and most anxious care of my parents was to sow abundantly the seeds of Christian virtue in my infant breast. In this, as in all their proceed-

ings, they strictly followed the steps of those whose virtue had received the sanction of their church. Religious instruction was conveyed to my mind with the rudiments of speech; and if early impressions alone could be trusted for the future complexion of a child's character, the music, and the splendid pageantry of the cathedral of Seville, which was to me the first scene of mental enjoyment, might, at this day, be the soundest foundation of my Catholic faith.

"Divines have declared that moral responsibility begins at the age of seven, and, consequently, children of quick parts are not allowed to go much longer without the advantage of confession. My mind had scarcely attained the first climacteric, when I had the full benefit of absolution for such sins as my good mother, who acted as the accusing conscience, could discover in my *naughtiness*. The church, we know, cannot be wrong; but to say the honest truth, all her pious contrivances have, by a sad fatality, produced in me just the reverse of their aim. Though the clergyman who was to shrive this young sinner had mild, gentle, and affectionate manners, there is something in auricular confession which has revolted my feelings from the day when I first knelt before a priest, in childish simplicity, to the last time I have been forced to repeat that ceremony, as a protection to my life and liberty, with scorn and contempt in my heart.

"Auricular confession, as a subject of theologi-

cal controversy, is, probably, beneath the notice of many; but I could not easily allow the name of philosopher to any one who should look upon an inquiry into the moral influence of that religious practice, as perfectly void of interest. It has been observed, with great truth, that the most philanthropic man would feel more uneasiness in the expectation of having his little finger cut off, than in the assurance that the whole empire of China was to be swallowed up the next day by an earthquake. If ever, therefore, these lines should meet the eye of the public in some distant country (for ages must pass before they can see the light in Spain), I entreat my readers to beware of indifference about evils from which it is their happiness to be free, and to make a due allowance for the feelings which lead me into a short digression. They certainly cannot expect to be acquainted with Spain without a sufficient knowledge of the powerful moral engines which are at work in that country; and they will, perhaps, find that a Spanish priest may have something to say which is new to them on the subject of confession.

"The effects of confession upon young minds are, generally, unfavourable to their future peace and virtue. It was to that practice I owed the first taste of remorse, while yet my soul was in a state of infant purity. My fancy had been strongly impressed with the awful conditions of the penitential law, and the word *sacrilege* had made me shudder on being told that the act of concealing any thought

or action, the rightfulness of which I suspected, would make me guilty of that worst of crimes, and greatly increase my danger of everlasting torments. My parents had, in this case, done no more than their duty, according to the rules of their church. But, though they had succeeded in rousing my fear of hell, this was, on the other hand, too feeble to overcome a childish bashfulness, which made the disclosure of a harmless trifle, an effort above my strength.

"The appointed day came at last, when I was to wait on the confessor. Now wavering, now determined not to be guilty of sacrilege, I knelt before the priest, leaving, however, in my list of sins, the last place to the hideous offence—I believe it was a petty larceny committed on a young bird. But, when I came to the dreaded point, shame and confusion fell upon me, and the accusation stuck in my throat. The imaginary guilt of this silence haunted my mind for four years, gathering horrors at every successive confession, and rising into an appalling spectre, when, at the age of twelve, I was taken to receive the sacrament. In this miserable state I continued till, with the advance of reason, I plucked, at fourteen, courage enough to unburthen my conscience by a general confession of the past. And let it not be supposed that mine is a singular case, arising either from morbid feeling or the nature of my early education. Few, indeed, among the many penitents I have examined, have escaped

the evils of a similar state; for, what a silly bashfulness does in children, is often, in after-life, the immediate effect of that shame by which fallen frailty clings still to wounded virtue. The necessity of confession, seen at a distance, is lighter than a feather in the balance of desire; while, at a subsequent period, it becomes a punishment on delicacy —an instrument to blunt the moral sense, by multiplying the subjects of remorse, and directing its greatest terrors against imaginary crimes.

"These evils affect, nearly equally, the two sexes; but there are some that fall peculiarly to the lot of the softer. Yet the remotest of all—at least, as long as the Inquisition shall exist—is the danger of direct seduction by the priest. The formidable powers of that odious tribunal have been so skilfully arrayed against the abuse of sacramental trust, that few are found base and blind enough to make the confessional a *direct* instrument of debauch. The strictest delicacy, however, is, I believe, inadequate fully to oppose the demoralizing tendency of auricular confession. Without the slightest responsibility, and, not unfrequently, in the conscientious discharge of what he believes his duty, the confessor conveys to the female mind the first foul breath which dims its virgin purity. He, undoubtedly, has a right to interrogate upon subjects which are justly deemed awkward even for maternal confidence; and it would require more than common simplicity to suppose that a discre-

tionary power of this nature, left in the hands of thousands—men beset with more than common temptations to abuse it—will generally be exercised with proper caution. But I will no longer dwell upon this subject for the present. Men of unprejudiced minds will easily conjecture what I leave unsaid; while to shew a hope of convincing such as have made a full and irrevocable surrender of their judgment, were only to libel my own.

"From the peculiar circumstances of my country, the training of my mental faculties was an object of little interest with my parents. There could be scarcely any doubt in the choice of a line of life for me, who was the eldest of four chidren. My father's fortune was improving; and I might help and succeed him with advantage to myself and two sisters. It was, therefore, in my father's counting-house, that, under the care of an old trusty clerk, I learned writing and arithmetic. To be a perfect stranger to literature is not, even now, a disgrace among the better class of Spaniards. But my mother, whose pride, though greatly subdued, was never conquered by devotion, felt anxious that, since, from prudential motives, I was doomed to be buried for life in a counting-house, a little knowledge of Latin should distinguish me from a mere mercantile drudge. A private teacher was accordingly procured, who read with me in the evening, after I had spent the best part of the day in making copies of the extensive correspondence of the house

"I was now about ten years old, and though, from a child, excessively fond of reading, my acquaintance with books did not extend beyond a history of the Old Testament — a collection of the Lives of the Saints mentioned in the Catholic Almanack, out of which I chose the Martyrs, for modern saints were never to my taste—a little work that gave an amusing miracle of the Virgin for every day of the year*—and prized above all, a Spanish translation of Fenelon's Telemachus, which I perused till I had nearly learned it by heart. I heard, therefore, with uncommon pleasure, that, in acquiring a knowledge of Latin, I should have to read stories not unlike that of my favourite the Prince of Ithaca. Little time, however, was allowed me for study, lest, from my love of learning, I should conceive a dislike to mercantile pursuits. But my mind had taken a decided bent. I hated the counting-house, and loved my books. Learning and the church were, to me, inseparable ideas; and I soon declared to my mother that I would be nothing but a clergyman.

"This declaration roused the strongest prejudices of her mind and heart, which cold prudence had only damped into acquiescence. To have a son who shall daily hold in his hands the real body of Christ, is an honour, a happiness which raises the humblest Spanish woman into a self-complacent

* See Note C.

consequence that attends her through life. What, then, must be the feelings of one who, to the strongest sense of devotion, joins the hope of seeing the dignities and emoluments of a rich and proud Church bestowed upon a darling child? The Church, besides, by the law of celibacy, averts that mighty terror of a fond mother—a wife, who, sooner or later, is to draw away her child from home. A boy, therefore, who at the age of ten or twelve, dazzled either by the gaudy dress of an officiating priest—by the importance he sees others acquire, when the bishop confers upon them the clerical tonsure—or by any other delusion of childhood, declares his intention of taking orders, seldom, very seldom escapes the heavy chain which the Church artfully hides under the tinsel of honours, and the less flimsy, though also less attainable splendour of her gold. Such a boy, among the poor, is infallibly plunged into a convent; if he belongs to the gentry, he is destined to swell the ranks of the secular clergy.

"It is true that, in all ages and countries, the leading events of human life are inseparably linked with some of the slightest incidents of childhood. But this fact, instead of an apology, affords the heaviest charge against the crafty and barbarous system of laying snares, wherein unsuspecting innocence may, at the very entrance of life, lose every chance of future peace, happiness and virtue. To allow a girl of sixteen to bind herself, for ever,

with vows—not only under the awful, though distant guardianship of heaven, but the odious and immediate superintendence of man—ranks, indeed, with the most hideous abuses of superstition. The law of celibacy, it is true, does not bind the secular clergy till the age of twenty-one; but this is neither more nor less than a mockery of common sense, in the eyes of those who practically know how frivolous is that latitude.* A man has seldom the means to embrace, or the aptitude to exercise a profession for which he has not been trained from early youth. It is absurd and cruel to pretend that a young man, whose best ten or twelve years have been spent in preparation for orders, is at full liberty to turn his back upon the Church when he has arrived at one-and-twenty. He may, indeed, preserve his liberty; but to do so he must forget that most of his patrimony has been laid out on his education, that he is too old for a cadetship in the army, too poor for commerce, and too proud for a petty trade. He must behold, unmoved, the tears of his parents; and, casting about for subsistence, in a country where industry affords no resource, love, the main cause of these struggles, must content itself with bare possible lawfulness, and bid adieu to the hope of possession. Wherever

* The secular clergy are not bound by vows. Celibacy is enforced upon them by a law which makes their marriage illegal, and punishable by the Ecclesiastical Courts.

unnatural privations make not a part of the clerical duty, many may find themselves in the Church who might be better elsewhese. But no great effort is wanted to make them happy in themselves, and useful to the community. Not so under the unfeeling tyranny of our ecclesiastical law. For, where shall we find that virtue which, having Nature herself for its enemy, and misery for its meed, will be able to extend its care to the welfare of others?—As to myself, the tenour and colour of my life were fixed the moment I expressed my childish wish of being a clergyman. The love of knowledge, however, which betrayed me into the path of wretchedness, has never forsaken its victim. It is probable that I could not have found happiness in uneducated ignorance. Scanty and truly hard-earned as it is the store on which my mind feeds itself, I would not part with it for a whole life of unthinking pleasure: and since the necessity of circumstances left me no path to mental enjoyment, except that I have so painfully trodden, I hail the moment when I entered it, and only bewail the fatality which fixed my birth in a Catholic country.

"The order of events would here require an account of the system of Spanish education, and its first effects upon my mind; but, since I speak of myself only to shew the state of my country, I shall proceed with the moral influence, that, without interruption, I may present the facts relating

severally to the heart and intellect, in as large masses as the subject permits.

"The Jesuits, till the abolition of that order, had an almost unrivalled influence over the better classes of Spaniards. They had nearly monopolized the instruction of the Spanish youth, at which they toiled without pecuniary reward; and were equally zealous in promoting devotional feelings both among their pupils and the people at large. It is well known that the most accurate division of labour was observed in the allotment of their various employments. Their candidates, who, by a refinement of ecclesiastical policy, after an unusually long probation, were bound by vows, which, depriving them of liberty, yet left a discretionary power of ejection in the order; were incessantly watched by the penetrating eye of the master of novices: a minute description of their character and peculiar turn was forwarded to the superiors, and at the end of the noviciate, they were employed to the advantage of the community, without ever thwarting the natural bent of the individual, or diverting his natural powers by a multiplicity of employments. Wherever, as in France and Italy, literature was in high estimation, the Jesuits spared no trouble to raise among themselves men of eminence in that department. In Spain, their chief aim was to provide their houses with popular preachers, and zealous, yet prudent and gentle, confessors. Pascal, and the Jansenist party, of

which he was the organ, accused them of systematic laxity in their moral doctrines: but the charge, I believe, though plausible in theory, was perfectly groundless in practice. If, indeed, ascetic virtue could ever be divested of its connatural evil tendency—if a system of moral perfection that has for its basis, however disavowed and disguised, the Manichæan doctrine of the two principles, could be applied with any partial advantage as a rule of conduct, it was so in the hands of the Jesuits. The strict, unbending maxims of the Jansenists, by urging persons of all characters and tempers to an imaginary goal of perfection, bring quickly their whole system to the decision of experience. They are like those enthusiasts who, venturing upon the practice of some Gospel sayings, in the literal sense, have made the absurdity of that interpretation as clear as noon-day light. A greater knowledge of mankind made the Jesuits more cautious in the culture of devotional feelings. They well knew that but few can prudently engage in open hostility with what in ascetic language is called the world. They now and then trained up a sturdy champion, who, like their founder Loyóla, might provoke the enemy to single combat with honour to his leaders; but the crowd of mystic combatants were made to stand upon a kind of jealous truce, which, in spite of all care, often produced some jovial meetings of the advanced parties on both sides. The good fathers came forward,

rebuked their soldiers back into the camp, and filled up the place of deserters by their indefatigable industry in engaging recruits.

"The influence of the Jesuits on the Spanish morals, from every thing I have learned, was undoubtedly favourable. Their kindness attracted the youth from the schools to their company: and, though this intimacy was often employed in making proselytes to the order, it also contributed to the preservation of virtue in that slippery age, both by the ties of affection, and the gentle check of example. Their churches were crowded every Sunday with regular attendants, who came to confess and receive the sacrament. The practice of choosing a certain priest, not only to be the occasional confessor, but *director of the conscience*, was greatly encouraged by the Jesuits. The ultimate effects of this surrender of the judgment are, indeed, dangerous and degrading; but, in a country where the darkest superstition is constantly impelling the mind into the opposite extremes of religious melancholy and profligacy, weak persons are sometimes preserved from either by the friendly assistance of a prudent *director*; and the Jesuits were generally well qualified for that office. Their conduct was correct, and their manners refined. They kept up a dignified intercourse with the middling and higher classes, and were always ready to help and instruct the poor, without descending to their level. Since the expulsion of the Jesuits, the better classes, for

the most part, avoid the company of monks and friars, except in an official capacity; while the lower ranks, from which these professional saints are generally taken, and where they re-appear, raised, indeed, into comparative importance, but grown bolder in grossness and vice, suffer more from their influence than they would by being left without any religious ministers.*

"Since the abolition of the Jesuits, their devotional system has been kept up, though upon a much narrower scale, by the congregations of Saint Philip Neri (*l'Oratoire*, in France), an Italian of the sixteenth century, who established voluntary associations of secular clergymen, living together under an easy rule, but without monastic vows, in order to devote themselves to the support of piety. The number, however, of these associated priests is so small, that, notwithstanding their zeal and their studied imitation of the Jesuits, they are but a faint shadow of that surprising institution. Yet these priests alone have inherited the skill of Loyóla's followers in the management of the ascetic contrivance, which, invented by that ardent fanatic, is still called, from his Christian name, *Exercises of Saint Ignatius*. As it would be impossible to sketch the history of my mind and heart without noticing the influence of that powerful engine, I cannot omit a description of the establishment kept by the *Phi-*

* See note D.

lippians at Seville—the most complete of its kind that probably has ever existed.

"The *Exercises of Saint Ignatius* are a series of meditations on various religious subjects, so artificially disposed, that the mind being at first thrown into distressing horror, may be gradually raised to hope, and finally soothed, not into a certainty of Divine favour, but a timid consciousness of pardon. Ten consecutive days are passed in perfect abstraction from all wordly pursuits. The persons who submit to this spiritual discipline, leave their homes for rooms allotted to them in the religious house where the Exercises are to be performed, and yield themselves up to the direction of the president. The priest, who for nearly thirty years has been acting in that capacity at Seville, enjoys such influence over the wealthy part of the town, that, not satisfied with the temporary accommodation which his convent afforded to the pious guests, he can now lodge the Exercitants in a separate building, with a chapel annexed, and every requisite for complete abstraction, during the days of their retirement. Six or eight times in the year the Exercises are performed by different sets of fifty persons each. The utmost precision and regularity are observed in the distribution of their time. Roused by a large bell at five in the morning, they immediately assemble in the chapel to begin the meditation appointed for the day. At their meals they observe a deep silence; and no intercourse, even

among each other, is permitted, except during one hour in the evening. The settled gloom of the house, the almost incessant reading and meditation upon subjects which, from their vagueness and infinitude, harass and bewilder the fancy, and that powerful sympathetic influence, which affects assemblies where all are intent on the same object and bent on similar feelings, render this house a modern cave of Trophonius, within whose dark cells cheerfulness is often extinguished for ever.

"Unskilful, indeed, must be the hand that, possessed of this engine, can fail to subdue the stoutest mind in which there lurks a particle of superstitious fear. But Father Vega is one of those men who are born to command a large portion of their fellow creatures, either by the usual means, or some contrivance of their own. The expulsion of the Jesuits during his probationship in that order, denied him the ample field on which his early views had been fixed. After a course of theological studies at the University, he became a member of the *Oratorio*, and soon attracted the notice of the whole town by his preaching. His active and bold mind combines qualities seldom found in the same individual. Clear-headed, resolute, and ambitious, the superstitious feelings which melt him into tears whenever he performs the Mass, have not in the least impaired the mental daringness he originally owes to nature. Though seldom mixing in society, he is a perfect man of the world. Far from compro-

mising his lofty claims to respect, he flatters the proudest nobles of his spiritual train by well-timed bursts of affected rudeness, which, being a mere display of spiritual authority, perfectly consistent with a full acknowledgment of their worldly rank and dignity, give them, in the eyes of the more humble bystanders, the additional merit of Christian condescension. As an instance of this, I recollect his ordering the Marquis del Pedroso, one of the haughtiest men in this town, to fetch up-stairs from the chapel, a heavy gold frame set with jewels, in which the Host is exhibited, for the inspection of the company during the hour of recreation allowed in the Exercises. No man ever shewed such assurance and consciousness of Heaven's delegated authority as Father Vega, in the Confessional. He reads the heart of his penitent — impresses the mind with the uselessness of disguise, and relieves shame by a strong feeling that he has anticipated disclosure. In preaching, his vehemence rivets the mind of the hearers; a wild luxuriance of style engages them with perpetual variety; expectation is kept alive by the remembered flashes of his wit; while the homely, and even coarse, expressions he allows himself, when he feels the whole audience already in his power, give him that air of superiority which seems to set no bounds to the freedom of manner.

" It is however, in his private chapel that Father Vega has prepared the grand scene of his triumphs

over the hearts of his audience. Twice every day, during the Exercises, he kneels for the space of one hour, surrounded by his congregation. Daylight is excluded, and a candle is so disposed in a shade that, without breaking the gloom of the chapel, it shines on a full-length sculpture of Christ nailed to the Cross, who, with a countenance where exquisite suffering is blended with the most lovely patience, seems to be on the point of moving his lips to say—" Father, forgive them !" The mind is at first allowed to dwell, in the deepest silence, on the images and sentiments with which previous reading has furnished it, till the Director, warmed with meditation, breaks forth in an impressive voice, not, however, addressing himself to his hearers, from whom he appears completely abstracted, but pouring out his heart in the presence of the Deity. Silence ensues after a few sentences, and not many minutes elapse without a fresh ejaculation. But the fire gradually kindles into a flame. The addresses grow longer and more impassioned; his voice, choked with sobs and tears, struggles painfully for utterance, till the stoutest hearts are forced to yield to the impression, and the chapel resounds with sighs and groans.

" I cannot but shudder at the recollection that my mind was made to undergo such an ordeal at the age of fifteen; for it is a custom of the diocese of Seville to prepare the candidates for orders by

the Exercises of Saint Ignatius; and even those who are to be incorporated with the clergy by the ceremony of the *First Tonsure*, are not easily spared this trial. I was grown up a timid, docile, yet ardent boy. My soul, as I have already mentioned, had been early made to taste the bitterness of remorse, and I now eagerly embraced the offer of those expiatory rites which, as I fondly thought, were to restore lost innocence, and keep me for ever in the straight path of virtue. The shock, however, which my spirits felt, might have unnerved me for life, and reduced my faculties to a state little short of imbecility, had I not received from nature, probably as a compensation for a too soft and yielding heart, an understanding which was born a rebel. Yet, I cannot tell whether it was my heart or my head, that, in spite of a frighted fancy, endued me with resolution to baffle the blind zeal of my confessor, when, finding, during these Exercises, that I knew the existence of a prohibited book in the possession of a student of divinity, who, out of mere good nature, assisted my early studies; he commanded me to accuse my friend before the Inquisition. Often have I been betrayed into a wrong course of thinking, by a desire to assimilate myself to those I loved, and thus enjoy that interchange of sentiment which forms the luxury of friendship. But even the chains of love, the strongest I know within the range of nature, could never hold me,

the moment I conceived that error had bound them. This, however, brings me to the history of my mind.

" An innate love of truth, which shewed itself on the first developement of my reason, and a consequent perseverance in the pursuit of it to the extent of my knowledge, that has attended me through life, saved me from sinking into the dregs of Aristotelic philosophy, which, though discountenanced by the Spanish government, are still collected in a few filthy pools, fed by the constant exertions of the Dominicans. Unfortunately for me, these monks have a richly endowed college at Seville, where they give lectures on Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, to a few young men whom they recruit at the expense of flattering their parents. My father's confessor was a Dominican, and he marked me for a divine of his own school. My mother, whose heart was with the Jesuits, would fain have sent me to the University, where the last remnant of their pupils still held the principal chairs. But she was informed by the wily monk, that *heresy* had began to creep among the new professors of philosophy—heresy of such a horrible tendency, that it nearly amounted to polytheism. The evidence on which this charge was grounded, seemed, indeed, irresistible; for you had only to open the second volume of one Altieri, a Neapolitan friar, whose Elements of philosophy are still used as a class-book at the University of Seville, and you

would find, in the first pages, that he makes *space* uncreated, infinite, and imperishable. From such premises the consequence was evident; the new philosophers were clearly setting up a rival deity.

"With the usual preparation of a little Latin, but in absolute want of all elementary instruction, I was sent to begin a course of logic at the Dominican college. My desire of learning was great indeed; but the *Categoriæ ad mentem Divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, in a large quarto volume, were unsavoury food for my mind, and, after a few vain efforts to conquer my aversion, I ended in never opening the dismal book. Yet, untrained as I was to reading, books were necessary to my happiness. In any other country I should have met with a variety of works, which, furnishing my mind with facts and observations, might have led me into some useful or agreeable pursuit. But in Spain, the chances of lighting on a good book are so few, that I must reckon my acquaintance with one that could open my mind, among the fortunate events of my life. A near relation of mine, a lady, whose education had been superior to that commonly bestowed on Spanish females, possessed a small collection of Spanish and French books. Among these were the works of Don Fray Benito Feyjoo, a Benedictine monk, who, rising above the intellectual level of his country, about the beginning of the present (18th) century, had the boldness to attack every established error which was not under the imme-

diate patronage of religion. His mind was endowed with extraordinary clearness and acuteness; and having, by an extensive reading of Latin and French works, acquired a great mass of information on physical and historical subjects, he displayed it, with peculiar felicity of expression, in a long series of discourses and letters, forming a work of fourteen large closely printed volumes.*

"It was not without difficulty that I obtained leave to try whether my mind, which had hitherto lain a perfect waste, was strong enough to understand and relish Feyjoo. But the contents of his pages came like the spring showers upon a thirsty soil. A man's opinion of the first work he read when a boy, cannot safely be trusted; but, to judge from the avidity with which at the age of fifteen I devoured fourteen volumes on miscellaneous subjects, and the surprising impulse they gave to my yet unfolded faculties, Feyjoo must be a writer who deserves more notice than he has ever obtained from his countrymen. If I can trust my recollection, he had deeply imbibed the spirit of Lord Bacon's works, together with his utter contempt of the absurd philosophy which has been universally taught in Spain, till the last third of the eighteenth century. From Bayle, Feyjoo had learned caution in weighing historical evidence, and an habitual

* Feyjoo died in 1765. Several of his Essays were published in English by John Brett, Esq. 1780.

suspicion of the numberless opinions which, in countries unpurified by the wholesome gales of free contending thought, are allowed to range unmolested, for ages, with the same claim to the rights of prescription as frogs and insects have to their stagnant pools. In a pleasing and popular style, Feyjoo acquainted his countrymen with whatever discoveries in experimental philosophy had been made by Boyle at that time. He declared open war against quackery of all kinds. Miracles and visions which had not received the sanction of the Church of Rome did not escape the scrutinizing eye of the bold Benedictine. Such, in fact, was the alarm produced by his works on the all-believing race for whom he wrote, that nothing but the patronage of Ferdinand VI. prevented his being silenced with the *ultima ratio* of Spanish divines—the Inquisition.

"Had the power of Aladdin's lamp placed me within the richest subterraneous palace described in the Arabian Nights, it could not have produced the raptures I experienced from the intellectual treasure of which I now imagined myself the master. Physical strength developes itself so gradually, that few, I am inclined to think, derive pleasure from a sudden start of bodily vigour. But my mind, like a young bird in the nest, had lived unconscious of its wings, till this unexpected leader had, by his boldness, allured it into flight. From a state of mere animal life, I found myself at once possessed

of the faculty of thinking; and I can scarcely conceive, that the soul, emerging after death into a higher rank of existence, shall feel and try its new powers with a keener delight. My knowledge, it is true, was confined to a few physical and historical facts; but I had, all at once, learned to reason, to argue, to doubt. To the surprise and alarm of my good relatives, I had been changed within a few weeks, into a sceptic who, without questioning religious subjects, would not allow any one of their settled notions to pass for its current value. My mother, with her usual penetration, perceived the new tendency of my mind, and thanked Heaven, in my presence, that Spain was my native country; 'else,' she said, 'he would soon quit the pale of the church.'

"The main advantage, however, which I owed to my new powers, was a speedy emancipation from the Aristotelic school of the Dominicans. I had, sometimes, dipped into the second volume of their Elements of Philosophy, and had found, to my utter dismay, that they denied the existence of a *vacuum*—one of my then favourite doctrines—and attributed the ascent of liquids by suction, to the horror of nature at being wounded and torn. Now, it so happened that Feyjoo had given me the clearest notions on the theory of the sucking-pump, and the relative gravity of air and water. Nothing, therefore, could equal my contempt of those monks, who still contended for the whole system of

sympathies and antipathies. A reprimand from the reverend Professor of Logic, for my utter inattention to his lectures, sprung, at length, the mine which, charged with the first scraps of learning, and brimful of boyish conceit, had long been ready to explode.

"Had the friar remonstrated with me in private, my habitual timidity would have sealed up my lips. But he rated me before the whole class, and my indignation fired up at such an indignity. Rising from my seat with a courage so new to me that it seemed to be inspired, I boldly declared my determination not to burden and pervert my mind with the absurdities that were taught in their schools. Being asked, with a sarcastic smile, which were the doctrines that had thus incurred my disapprobation, I visibly surprised the Professor—no bright genius himself—with the theory of the sucking-pump, and actually nonplus'd him on the mighty question of *vacuum*. To be thus bearded by a stripling, was more than his professional humility could bear. He bade me thank my family for not being that moment turned out of the lecture-room ; assuring me, however, that my father should be acquainted with my impertinence in the course of that day. Yet I must do justice to his good-nature and moderation in checking the students, who wished to serve me, like Sancho, with a blanketing.

"Before the threatened message could reach my

father, I had, with great rhetorical skill, engaged maternal pride and fear, in my favour. In what colours the friar may have painted my impudence, I neither learned nor cared: for my mother, whose dislike of the Dominicans, as the enemies of the Jesuits, had been roused by the public reprimand of the Professor, took the whole matter into her hands, and before the end of the week, I heard, with raptures, that my name was to be entered at the University.

"Havingthus luckily obtained the object of my wishes, I soon retrieved my character for industry, and received the public thanks of my new Professor. What might have been my progress under a better system than that of a Spanish university, vanity will probably not allow me to judge with fairness. I will, therefore, content myself with laying a sketch of that system before the reader.

"The Spanish universities had continued in a state worthy of the thirteenth century, till the year 1770, when the Marquis of Roda, a favourite minister of Charles III., gave them an amended plan of studies, which though far below the level of knowledge over the rest of Europe, seems at least to recognise the progress of the human mind since the revival of letters. The present plan forbids the study of the Aristotelic philosophy, and attempts the introduction of the inductive system of Bacon; but is shamefully deficient, in the department of literature. Three years successive attendance in

the schools of logic, natural philosophy, and metaphysics, is the only requisite for a master's degree; and, though the examinations are both long and severe, few of the Spanish universities have yet altered the old statute which obliges the candidates to draw their Theses from Aristotle's logic and physics, and to deliver a long discourse upon one chapter of each; thus leaving their daily lectures perfectly at variance with the final examinations. Besides these preparatory schools, every university has three or four professors of divinity, as many of civil and canon law, and seldom less of medicine. The students are not required to live in colleges There are, however, establishments of this kind for under-graduates; but being, for the most part, intended for a limited number of poor boys, they make no part of the Academic system. Yet some of these colleges have, by a strange combination of circumstances, risen to such a height of splendour and influence, that I must digress into a short sketch of their history.

" The original division of Spanish colleges into *minor* and *major*, arose from the branches of learning for which they were intended. Grammar and rhetoric alone were taught in the first; divinity, law, and medicine, in the last. Most of the *Colegios Mayores* were, by papal bulls and royal decrees, erected into *universities*, where, besides the fellows, students might repair daily to hear the public lectures, and finally take their degrees. Thus the uni-

versity of this town (Seville) was, till lately, attached to this college, the rector or head of which elected annually by the fellows, was, by virtue of his office, rector of the university. This, and the great colleges of Castille, enjoying similar privileges, but far exceeding ours in wealth and influence, formed the literary aristocracy of Spain. Though the statutes gave no exclusion to plebeians, the circumstances required in the candidates for fellowships, together with the *esprit de corps* which actuated the electors, confined such places to the *noblesse*. Anxious to increase their influence, none of the six great colleges of Spain could ever be induced to elect any one who was not connected with some of the best families. This, however, was but a prudential step, to avoid the public disgrace to which the *pruebas*, or interrogatories relative to *blood*, might otherwise expose the candidates. One of the fellows was, and is still at Seville, according to the statutes, to repair to the birth-place of the parents of the elected member, as well as to those of his two grandfathers and grandmothers—except when any of them is a foreigner, a circumstance which prevents the journey, though not the inquiry —in order to examine upon oath, from fifteen to thirty witnesses at each place. These, either from their own knowledge, or the current report of the town, must swear that the ancestor in question never was a menial servant, a shopkeeper or petty tradesman; a mechanic; had neither himself, nor any

of his relations, been punished by the Inquisition, nor was descended from Jews, Moors, Africans, Indians, or Guanchos, *i. e.* the aborigines of the Canary Islands. It is evident that none but the hereditary gentry could expose themselves to this ordeal: and as the pride of the reporter, together with the character of his college, were highly interested in the purity of blood of every member, no room was left for the evasions commonly resorted to for the admission of knights in the military orders.

" Thus, in the course of years, the six great colleges* could command the influence of the first Spanish families all over the kingdom. It was, besides, a point of honour among such as had obtained a fellowship, never to desert the interest of their college: and, as every cathedral in Spain has three canonries, which must be obtained by a literary competition, of which the canons themselves are the judges, wherever a *Colegidl Mayór* had obtained a stall, he was able to secure a strong party to any one of his college who should offer himself as a champion at those literary jousts. The chap-

* There exist in Spain some other colleges which are also called *mayores;* but none, except four at Salamanca, one at Valladolid, and one at Seville, were reckoned as a part of the literary aristocracy of the country. None but these had the privilege of referring all their interests and concerns to a committee of the supreme council of the nation, expressly named for that purpose.

ters, on the other hand, were generally inclined to strengthen their own importance by the accession of people of rank, leaving poor and unknown scholars to grovel in their native obscurity. No place of honour in the church and law was left unoccupied by the *collegians:* and even the distribution which those powerful bodies made of their members—as if not only all the best offices and situations, but even a choice of them, were in their hands—was no secret to the country at large. Fellows in orders, who possessed abilities, were kept in reserve for the literary *competitions.* Such as could not appear to advantage at those public trials were, by means of court favour, provided for with stalls in the wealthiest cathedrals. The absolutely dull and ignorant were made *inquisitors,* who, passing judgment in their secret halls, could not disgrace the college by their blunders. Medicine not being in honour, there were no fellows of that profession. The lay members of the major colleges belonged exclusively to the law, but they would never quit their fellowships except for a place among the judges. Even in the present low ebb of collegiate influence, the College of Seville would disown any of the fellows who should act as a mere advocate.

"While the colleges were still at the height of their power, a young lawyer offered himself for one of the fellowships at Salamanca, and was disdainfully rejected for want of sufficient proofs of *noblesse.*

By an extraordinary combination of circumstances, the offended candidate rose to be prime minister of state, under Charles III., with the title of Marquis of Roda. The extraordinary success he had met with in public life, could not, however, heal the wound his pride had received in his youth. But, besides the inducement of his private feelings, he seems to have been an enemy to all influence which was not exerted by the king and his ministers. Two powerful bodies, the Jesuits and the colleges, engrossed so forcibly, and, I may say, painfully, his attention, that it was wittily observed, 'that the spectacles he wore had painted glasses, one representing a Jesuit, the other a collegian'—and thus allowed him to see nothing else. The destruction to which he had doomed them was, at length, accomplished by his means. His main triumph was, indeed, over the Jesuits: yet his success against the colleges, though certainly less splendid, was the more gratifying to his personal feelings. The method he employed in the downfall of the last is not unworthy of notice, both for its perfect simplicty, and the light it throws upon the state and character of the country. Having the whole patronage of the Crown in his hands, he placed, within a short time, all the existing members of the Salamanca colleges, in the most desirable situations both of the church and law, filling their vacancies with young men of no family. Thus the bond of collegiate influence was suddenly snapped asunder: the old members

disowned their successors; and such as a few days before looked upon a fellowship as an object of ambition, would have felt mortified at the sight of a relative wearing the gown of a *reformed* college. The *Colégio Mayór* of Seville was attacked by other means. Without enforcing the admission of the unprivileged classes, the minister, by an arbitrary order, deprived it of its right to confer degrees. The convocation of doctors and masters was empowered to elect their own rector, and name professors for the schools, which were subsequently opened to the public in one of the deserted houses that had belonged to the Jesuits. Such is the origin of the university where I received my education.

"Slight, however, are the advantages which a young mind can derive from academical studies in Spain. To expect a rational system of education where the Inquisition is constantly on the watch to keep the human mind within the boundaries which the Church of Rome, with her host of divines, has set to its progress; would shew a perfect ignorance of the character of our religion. Thanks to the league between our church and state, the Catholic divines have nearly succeeded in keeping down knowledge to their own level. Even such branches of science as seem least connected with religion, cannot escape the theological rod; and the spirit which made Galileo recant upon his knees his discoveries in astronomy, still compels our professors

to teach the Copernican system as an hypothesis. The truth is that, with Catholic divines, no one pursuit of the human mind is independent of religion. Since the first appearance of Christianity, its doctrines have ever been blended with the philosophical views of their teachers. The scriptures themselves, invaluable as they are in forming the moral character, frequently touch, by incident, upon subjects unconnected with their main object, and treat of nature and civil society according to the notions of a rude people in a very primitive period. Hence the encroachments of divines upon every branch of human knowledge, which are still supported by the hand of power in a great part of Europe, but in none so outrageously as in Spain. Astronomy must ask the inquisitors' leave to see with her own eyes. Geography was long compelled to shrink before them. Divines were made the judges of Columbus's plans of discovery, as well as to allot a species to the Americans. A spectre monk haunts the Geologist in the lowest cavities of the earth; and one of flesh and blood watches the steps of the philosopher on its surface. Anatomy is suspected, and watched closely, whenever she takes up the scalpel; and Medicine had many a pang to endure while endeavouring to expunge the use of bark and inoculation from the catalogue of mortal sins. You must not only believe what the Inquisition believes, but yield implicit faith to the theories and explanations of her divines. To ac-

knowlege on the authority of Revelation, that mankind will rise from their graves, is not sufficient to protect the unfortunate Metaphysician, who should deny that man is a compound of two substances, one of which is naturally immortal. It was long a great obstacle to the rejection of the Aristotelic philosophy, that the *substantial forms* of the schools were found an exceedingly convenient veil for the invisible work of *transubstantiation*; for our good divines shrewdly suspected, that if colour, taste, smell, and all the other properties of bodies were allowed to be mere *accidents*—the bare impressions on our sense of one variously modified substance—it might be plausibly urged that, in the consecrated Host, the body of Christ had been converted into bread, not the bread into that body. But it would be endless and tedious to trace all the links, of which the Inquisition has formed the chain that binds and weighs down the human mind among us. Acquiescence in the voluminous and multifarious creed of the Roman church is by no means sufficient for safety. A man who closes his work with the O. S. C. S. R. E. *(Omnia sub correctione Sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ)* may yet rue the moment when he took pen in hand. Heterodoxy may be easily avoided in writing; but who can be sure that none of his periods *smacks of heresy* (sapiens hæresim)—none of his sentences are of that uncouth species which is *apt to grate pious ears* (piarum aurium offensivas)? Who then

will venture upon the path of knowledge, where it leads straight to the Inquisition ?*

"Yet such is the energy of the human mind, when once acquainted with its own powers, that the best organized system of intellectual tyranny, though so far successful as to prevent Spanish talent from bringing any fruit to maturity, fails most completely of checking its activity. Could I but accurately draw the picture of an ingenuous young mind struggling with the obstacles which Spanish education opposes to improvement—the alarm at the springing suspicions of being purposely betrayed into error—the superstitious fears that check its first longings after liberty—the honest and ingenious casuistry by which it encourages itself to leave the prescribed path—the maiden joy and fear of the first transgression—the rapidly-growing love of newly discovered truth, and consequent hatred of its tyrants—the final despair and wild phrenzy that possess it on finding its doom inevitable, on seeing with an appalling evidence, that its best exertions are lost, that ignorance, bigotry,

* .... Il s'est établi dans Madrid un système de liberté sur la vente des productions, qui s'étend même à celles de la presse ; et que, pourvu que je ne parle en mes écrits ni de l'autorité, ni du culte, ni de la politique, ni de la morale, ni des gens en place, ni des corps en crédit, ni de l'Opera, ni des autres spectacles, ni de personne qui tienne à quelque chose, je puis tout imprimer librement, sous l'inspection de deux ou trois censeurs.—*Marriage de Figaro, Act* 5, *Sc.* 3.

and superstition claim and can enforce its homage —no plot of romance would be read with more interest by such as are not indifferent to the noblest concerns of mankind. As I cannot, however, present an animated picture, I shall proceed with a statement of facts.

"An imperfect knowledge of logic and natural philosophy was all I acquired at the university before I began the study of divinity; and like most of my countrymen, I should have completed my studies without so much as suspecting the existence of elegant literature, had it not been for my acquaintance with an excellent young man, much my senior at the university, who, by his own unassisted industry, had made some progress in the study and imitation of the classics.* To him I owed my first acquaintance with Spanish poetry, and my earliest attempts at composition in my own language. My good fortune led me, but a short time after, to a member of the *Colégio Mayór* of this town—another self-improved man, whose extraordinary talents having enabled him, at the age of nineteen, to cast a gleam of good taste over the system of his own university of Osuna, made him subsequently, at Seville, the centre of a small club of students.† Through the influence of his genius, and the gratuitous assistance he gave them

* Don Manuel Maria del Marmol.

† Don Manuel Maria de Arjona.

in their studies, some of his private pupils rose so far above the mass of their academical fellows, as to shew by the fair, though scanty, produce of their minds, the rich promise which the state of their country yearly blasts.

"In all the Spanish universities with which I am acquainted, I have observed, a similar struggle between enterprising genius and constituted ignorance. Valencia, Granada, the college of San Fulgencio at Murcia; Salamanca, above all, and Seville, the least among them; have exhibited symptoms of rebellion, arising from the undaunted ardour of some young members, who having opened for themselves a path to knowledge, would, at some time or other, make a desperate effort to allure the rising generation to follow their steps. The boldest champions in this hopeless contest, have generally started among the professors of moral philosophy. Government had confined them to the puny Elements of Jacquier and Heinnecius; but a mind once set on "the proper study of mankind," must be weak indeed not to extend its views beyond the limits prescribed by the ignorance of a despot or his ministers. With alarm and consternation to the *white-tusselled* heads,* and

* A coloured tassel on the cap is, in Spain, the peculiar distinction of doctors and masters. *White*, denotes divinity: green, canon law: crimson, civil law: yellow, medicine; and blue, arts, i. e. philosophy. Those caps are worn only on public occasions at the universities.

thrilling hopes to their secret enemies, connected series of Theses have of late appeared among us, which, in spite of the studied caution of their language, betrayed both their origin and tendency. Genuine offspring of the French school, the very turn of their phrases gave strong indications of a style formed in defiance of the Holy Inquisition. But these fits of restless impatience have only secured the yoke they were intended to loosen. I have visited Salamanca after the great defeat of the philosophical party, the strongest that ever was formed in Spain. A man of first-rate literary character among us,* whom merit and court favour had raised to one of the chief seats in the judicature of the country, but whom court caprice had, about this time, sent to rusticate at Salamanca, was doing me the honours of the place, when, approaching the convocation-hall of the university, we perceived the members of the faculty of divinity strolling about, while waiting for a meeting of their body. A runaway slave, still bearing the marks of the lash on his return, could not have shrunk more instinctively at the sight of the planters meeting at the council-room, than my friend did at the view of the cowls, 'white, black, and grey,' which partially hid the sleek faces of his offended masters. He had, it is true, been lucky enough to escape the imprisonment and subsequent penance in a monastery

* Melendez Valdez.

which was the sad lot of the chief of his routed party; but he himself was still suspected and watched closely. The rest of his friends, the flower of the university, had been kept for three or four years, in constant fear of their personal liberty, being often called before the secret tribunal to answer the most captious interrogatories about themselves and their acquaintance, but never put in possession of every count of the indictment. After this and a few such examples, we have, at last, perceived the folly of engaging in a desperate game, where no possible combination can, for the present, give the dissenting party a single chance of success.

"French philosophy had not found its way to the university of Seville, at the time when I was studying divinity. Even the knowledge of the French language was a rare acquirement both among the professors and their hearers. I have mentioned, at the beginning of this sketch, that one of the few books which delighted my childhood was a Spanish translation of Telemachus. A fortunate incident had now thrown into my hands the original of my old favourite, and I attempted to understand a few lines by comparing them with the version. My success exceeded my hopes. Without either grammar or dictionary, I could, in a few weeks, read on: guessing a great deal, it is true, but visibly improving my knowledge of the idiom by comparing the force of unknown words in different passages. An odd volume of Racine's tragedies

was my next French book. Imperfectly as I must have understood that tender and elegant poet, his plays gave me so much pleasure, that by repeated readings I found myself able to understand French poetry. It was about this time that I made my invaluable acquaintance at our college. My friend had learned both French and Italian in a similar manner with myself. He was acquainted with one of the judges of our *Audiencia*, or provincial court of judicature, a man of great literary celebrity,* who possessed a very good library, from whence I was indulged with French books, as well as Italian; for by a little ingenuity and the analogy of my own language, I had also enabled myself to read the language of Petrarch.

"Hitherto I had never had courage enough to take a forbidden book in my hands. The excommunication impending over me by the words *ipso facto*, was indeed too terrific an object for my inexperienced mind. Delighted with my newly acquired taste for poetry and eloquence, I had never brooded over any religious doubts—or rather, sincerely adhering to the Roman Catholic law, which makes the examination of such doubts as great a crime as the denial of the article of belief they affect, I had always shrunk with terror from every heterodox suggestion. But my now intimate friend and guide had made canon law his profession.

* Don Juan Pablo Forner.

Ecclesiastical history, in which he was deeply versed, had, without weakening his Catholic principles, made him a pupil of that school of canonists who, both in Germany and France, having exposed the forgeries, by means of which papal power had made itself paramount to every human authority, were but too visibly disposed to a separation from Rome. My friend denied the existence of any power in the Church to inflict excommunication, without a declaratory sentence in consequence of the trial of the offender. Upon the strength of this doctrine, he made me read the 'Discourses on Ecclesiastical History,' by the Abbé Fleury—a work teeming with invective against monks and friars, doubts on modern miracles, and strictures on the virtues of modern saints. Eve's heart, I confess, when

> ———her rash hand in evil hour
> Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she ate,

could not have beaten more convulsively than mine, as I opened the forbidden book. Vague fears and doubts haunted my conscience for many days. But my friend, besides being a sound Catholic, was a devout man. He had lately taken priest's orders, and was now not only my literary but my spiritual director. His abilities and his affection to me had obtained a most perfect command over my mind, and it was not long before I could match

him in mental boldness, on points unconnected with articles of faith.

"This was, indeed, the happiest period of my life. The greatest part of my time, with the exception of that required for my daily attendance at the dull lectures of the divinity professors, was devoted to the French critics, André, Le Bossu, Batteux, Rollin, La Harpe, and many others of less note. The habit of analyzing language and ideas, which I acquired in the perusal of such works, soon led me to some of the French metaphysicians, especially Condillac.

"It was the favourite amusement of myself and those constant associates of my youth that formed the knot of friends, of whom the often mentioned *Colegiál Mayór* was the centre and guide; to examine all our feelings, in order to resolve them into some general law, and trace them to their simple elements. This habit of analysis and generalization extended itself to the customs and habits of the country, and the daily incidents of life, till in the course of time it produced in me the deceitful, though not uncommon notion, that all knowledge is the result of developed principles, and gave me a distaste for every book that was not cast into a regular theory.

"While I was thus amused and deceived by the activity of my mind, without endeavouring to give it the weight and steadiness which depends upon the knowledge of facts; Catholicism, with its ten

thousand rules and practices, was mechanically keeping up the ill-contrived structure of devotion, which it had raised more in my fancy than my heart. It had now to contend, however, with an enemy whom nothing but fixed hope can keep within bounds — but religion had left me no hope. Instead of engaging love on her side, she had forced him into an inseparable league with immorality. I will not describe the misery that embittered my youth, and destroyed the peace of my maturer years—the struggles, perhaps the crimes, certainly the remorse, that were in me the consequence of the barbarous laws of my country. They are too intimately blended with *self*, too intricately entwined with the feelings of others, to be left exposed for ever to the cold indifference of the multitude. Whatever on this point is connected with the general state of Spain, has already been touched upon. Mine, indeed, is the lot of thousands. Often did I recoil at the approach of the moment when I was to bind myself for ever to the clerical profession, and as often my heart failed me at the sight of a mother in tears! It was no worldly interest—it was the eternal welfare of my soul, which she believed to depend on my following the call of Heaven, that made the best of mothers a snare to her dearest child. The persuasions of my confessor, and, above all, the happiness I experienced in restoring cheerfulness to my family, deluded me into the hope of preserv-

ing the same feeling through life. A very short time, however, was sufficient to open my eyes. The inexorable law that bound me, was the bitterest foe to my virtue. Yet devotion had not lost her power over my fancy, and I broke loose, more than once, from her thraldom, and was as often reclaimed, before the awful period which was to raise me to the priesthood.

" If mental excitement, attended with the most thrilling and sublime sensations, the effect of deception, could be indulged without injury to our noblest faculties—if life could be made a long dream without the painful startings produced by the din and collision of the world—if the opium of delusion could be largely administered without a complete enervation of our rational energies — the lot of a man of feeling, brought up in the undisturbed belief of the Catholic doctrines, and raised to be a dispenser of its mysteries; would be enviable above all others. No abstract belief, if I am to trust my experience, can either sooth our fears or feed our hopes, independently of the imagination; and I am strongly inclined to assert, that no genuine persuasion exists upon unearthly subjects, without the co-operation of the imaginative faculty. Hence the powerful effects of the splendid and striking system of worship adopted by the Roman church. A foreigner may be inclined to laugh at the strange ceremonies performed in a Spanish cathedral, because these ceremonies are a conventional language

to which he attaches no ideas. But he that from the cradle has been accustomed to kiss the hand of the priest, and receive his blessing — that has associated the name and attributes of the Deity with the consecrated bread—that has observed the awe with which it is handled—how none but annointed hands dare touch it—what clouds of incense, what brilliancy of gems surround it when exposed to the view—with what heartfelt anxiety the glare of lights, the sound of music, and the uninterrupted adoration of the priests in waiting, are made to evince the overpowering feeling of a God dwelling among men — such a man alone can conceive the state of a warm-hearted youth, who, for the first time approaches the altar, not as a mere attendant, but as the sole worker of the greatest of miracles.

" No language can do justice to my own feelings at the ceremony of ordination, the performance of the first mass, and during the interval which elapsed between this fever of enthusiasm and the cold sceptism that soon followed it. For some months previous to the awful ceremony I voluntarily secluded myself from the world, making religious reading and meditation the sole employment of my time. The *Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, which immediately preceded the day of ordination, filled my heart with what appeared to me a settled distaste for every wordly pleasure. When the consecrating rights had been performed—when my

hands had been annointed—the sacred vesture, at first folded on my shoulders, let drop around me by the hands of the bishop—the sublime hymn to the all-creating Spirit uttered in solemn strains, and the power of restoring sinners to innocence, conferred upon me—when, at length, raised to the dignity of a 'fellow-worker with God,' the bishop addressed me, in the name of the Saviour: 'Henceforth I call you not servant.... but I have called you friend;' I truly felt as if, freed from the material part of my being, I belonged to a higher rank of existence. I had still a heart, it is true — a heart ready to burst at the sight of my parents, on their knees, while impressing the first kiss on my newly-consecrated hands; but it was dead to the charms of beauty. Among the friendly crowd that surrounded me for the same purpose, were those lips which a few months before I would have died to press; yet I could but just mark their superior softness. In vain did I exert myself to check exuberance of feelings at my first mass. My tears bedewed the *corporals* on which, with the eyes of faith, I beheld the disguised lover of mankind whom I had drawn from heaven to my hands. These are dreams, indeed, — the illusions of an over-heated fancy; but dreams they are which some of the noblest minds have dreamt through life without waking—dreams which, while passing vividly before the mental eye, must entirely wrap up the soul of every one who is neither *more* nor *less* than a man.

"To exercise the privileges of my office for the benefit of my fellow-creatures, was now my exclusive aim and purpose. I daily celebrated mass, with due preparation, preached often, and rejected none that applied to me for confession. The best ascetic writers of the Church of Rome were constantly in my hands. I made a study of the Fathers; but, though I had the Scriptures among my books, it was, according to custom, more for reference than perusal. These feelings, this state of mental abstraction, is by no means uncommon, for a time, among young priests whose hearts have not been withered by a course of premature profligacy. It would be absurd to expect it in such as embrace the clerical state as a trade, or are led to the church by ambition, and least of all among the few that would never bind themselves with the laws of celibacy, had they not previously freed their minds from all religious fears. Yet, among my numerous acquaintance in the Spanish clergy, I have never met with any one, possessed of bold talents, who has not, sooner or later, changed from the most sincere piety to a state of unbelief.* Were every individual who has undergone this internal transformation to describe the steps by which it was accomplished, I doubt not but the general outline would prove alike in all. I shall, however, conclude my narrative by faithfully relating the origin and progress of the

* See Note E.

total change that took place in my mind within little more than a year after taking priest's orders.

"The ideas of consistency and perfection are strongly attached by every sincere Catholic to his system of faith. The church of Rome has played for many centuries a desperate though, till lately, a successful game. Having once proclaimed the necessity of an abtract creed for salvation, and made herself the infallible framer and expounder of that creed, she leaves her votaries no alternative but that of receiving or rejecting the whole of her doctrines. Luckily for her interests, men seldom go beyond a certain link in the chain of thought, or allow themselves to look into the sources of traditionary doctrines. Her theological system on the other hand, having so shaped its gradual growth as to fill up deficiencies as they were perceived, affords an ample range to every mind that, without venturing to examine the foundations, shall be contented with the symmetry, of the structure. I have often heard the question, how could such men as Bossuet and Fenelon adhere to the church of Rome and reject the Protestant faith? The answer appears to me obvious. Because, according to their fixed principles on this matter, they must have been either Catholics or Infidels. Laying it down as an axiom, that Christianity was chiefly intended to reveal a system of doctrines necessary for salvation, they naturally and consistently inferred the existence of an authorized

judge upon questions of faith, otherwise the inevitable doubts arising from private judgment would defeat the object of revelation. Thus it is that Bossuet thought he had triumphantly confuted the Protestants by merely shewing that they could not agree in their Articles. Like Bossuet, most Catholic divines can see no medium between denying the infallible authority of the Church and rejecting revelation.

"No proposition in Euclid could convey stronger conviction to my mind than that which I found in this dilemma. Let me but prove, said I to myself, that there exists a single flaw in the system, and it will all crumble into dust Yet, as in a Catholic, 'once to doubt is once to be resolved,' I might have eternally closed my eyes, like many others, against the impression of the most glaring falsehoods; for how could I retrieve the rash step of holding my judgment in suspense while I examined? The most hideous crimes fall within the jurisdiction of a confessor; but the mortal taint of heresy cannot be removed except by the Pope's delegated authority, which, in Spain, he has deposited in the hands of the Inquisition. Should I deliberately indulge my doubts for a moment, what a mountain of crime and misery I should bring upon my head! My office would, probably, lay me under the necessity of celebrating mass the next day, which, to do with a consciousness of unabsolved sin, is sacrilege; while this particular offence would besides

involve me in the ecclesiastical sentence of *suspension* and *interdict*. The recurring necessity of officiating at the altar, before I could remove these inabilities, would increase them every day tenfold, and give my life a foretaste of the torturing fire to which I should be doomed by the sentence of my church. These fears are not peculiar to timid or weak characters: they are the legitimate consequences of a consistent and complicated system, and cannot be dispelled but by a decided rejection of the whole.

The involuntary train, however, both of feeling and thought, which was to make me break out into complete rebellion, had long been sapping the foundations of my faith, without my being aware that the whole structure nodded to its ruin. A dull sense of existence, a heaviness that palled my taste for life and its concerns, had succeeded my first ardour of devotion. Conscientiously faithful to my engagements, and secluded from every object that might ruffle the calm of my heart, I looked for happiness in the performance of my duty. But happiness was fled from me; and, though totally exempt from remorse, I could not bear the death-like silence of my soul. An unmeaning and extremely burdensome practice laid by the Church of Rome upon her clergy, contributed not a little to increase the irksomeness of my circumstances. A Catholic clergyman, who employs his whole day in the discharge of his duty to others,

must yet repeat to himself the service of the day in an audible voice—a performance which neither constant practice, nor the most rapid utterance can bring within the compass of less than an hour and a half in the four-and-twenty. This exhausting exercise is enjoined under pain of mortal sin, and the restitution of that day's income on which any portion of the office is omitted.

"Was mine a life of usefulness?—Did not the world, with all its struggles, its miseries, and its vices, hold out nobler and more exalted ends than this tame and deadening system of perfection? How strong must be the probability of future reward, to balance the actual certainty of such prolonged misery? Suppose, however, the reality and magnitude of the recompence—am I not daily, and hourly, in danger of eternal perdition? My heart sinks at the view of the interminable list of offences; every one of which may finally plunge me into the everlasting flames. Everlasting! and why so? Can there be revenge or cruelty in the Almighty? Such were the harassing thoughts with which I wrestled day and night. Prostrate upon my knees I daily prayed for deliverance; but my prayers were not heard. I tried to strengthen my faith by reading Bergier, and some of the French Apologists. But what can they avail a doubting Catholic? His system of faith being indivisible, the evidences of Christianity lead him to the most glaring absurdities. To argue with a doubting

Catholic is to encourage and hasten his desertion. Chateaubriand has perfectly understood the nature of his task, and by engaging the feelings and imagination in defence of his creed, has given it the fairest chance against the dry and tasteless philosophy of his countrymen. His book* propped up my faith for a while.

"Almost on the eve of my mental crisis, I had to preach a sermon upon an extraordinary occasion; when, according to a fashion derived from France, a long and elaborate discourse was expected. I made infidelity my subject, with a most sincere desire of convincing myself while I laboured to persuade others. What effect my arguments may have had upon the audience I know not; they were certainly lost upon the orator. Whatever, in this state, could break the habit of awe which I was so tenaciously supporting—whatever could urge me into uttering a doubt on one of the Articles of the Roman Creed, was sure to make my faith vanish like a soap-bubble in the air. I had been too earnest in my devotion, and my Church too pressing and demanding. Like a cold, artful, interested mistress, that Church either exhausts the ardour of her best lovers, or harasses them to destruction. As to myself, a moment's dalliance with her great rival, Freedom, converted my former love into perfect abhorrence.

One morning, as I was wrapt up in my usual

* "Beauties of Christianity," 3 vols. 8vo.

thoughts, on the banks of the Guadalquivir, a gentleman, who had lately been named by the government to an important place in our provincial judicature, joined me in the course of my ramble. We had been acquainted but a short time, and he, though forced into caution by an early danger from the Inquisition, was still friendly and communicative. His talents of forensic eloquence, and the sprightliness and elegance of his conversation, had induced a conviction on my mind, that he belonged to the philosophical party of the university where he had been educated. Urged by an irresistible impulse, I ventured with him upon neutral ground—monks, ecclesiastical encroachments, extravagant devotion—till the stream of thought I had thus allowed to glide over the feeble mound of my fears, swelling every moment, broke forth as a torrent from its long and violent confinement. I was listened to with encouraging kindness, and there was not a doubt in my heart which I did not disclose. Doubts they had, indeed, appeared to me till that moment; but utterance tranformed them, at once, into demonstrations. It would be impossible to describe the fear and trepidation that seized me the moment I parted from my good-natured confidant. The prisons of the Inquisition seemed ready to close their studded gates upon me; and the very hell I had just denied, appeared yawning before my eyes. Yet, a few days elapsed, and no evil had overtaken me. I performed mass with a heart in

open rebellion to the Church that enjoined it: but I had now settled with myself to offer it up to my Creator, as I imagine that the enlightened Greeks and Romans must have done their sacrifices. I was like them, forced to express my thankfulness in an absurd language.

"This first taste of mental liberty was more delicious than any feeling I ever experienced; but it was succeeded by a burning thirst for every thing that, by destroying my old mental habits, could strengthen and confirm my unbelief. I gave an exorbitant price for any French irreligious books, which the love of gain induced some Spanish booksellers to import at their peril. The intuitive knowledge of one another, which persecuted principles impart to such as cherish them in common, made me soon acquainted with several members of my own profession, deeply versed in the philosophical school of France. They possessed, and made no difficulty to lend me, all the Antichristian works, which teemed from the French press. Where there is no liberty, there can be no discrimination. The ravenous appetite raised by forced abstinence makes the mind gorge itself with all sorts of food. I suspect I have thus imbibed some false, and many crude notions from my French masters. But my circumstances preclude the calm and dispassionate examination which the subject deserves. Exasperated by the daily necessity of external submission to doctrines and persons I detest and despise, my

soul overflows with bitterness. Though I acknowledge the advantages of moderation, none being used towards me, I practically, and in spite of my better judgment, learn to be a fanatic on my own side.

" Pretending studious retirement, I have fitted up a small room, to which none but my confidential friends find admittance. There lie my *prohibited books*, in perfect concealment, in a well-contrived nook under a staircase. The *Breviary* alone, in its black-binding, clasps, and gilt leaves, is kept upon the table, to check the suspicions of any chance intruder."

LETTER IV.

Seville ——

An unexpected event has, since my last, thrown the inhabitants of this town into raptures of joy. The bull-fights which, by a royal order, had been discontinued for several years, were lately granted to the wishes of the people. The news of the most decisive victory could not have more elated the spirits of the Andalusians, or roused them into greater activity. No time was lost in making the necessary preparations. In the course of a few weeks all was ready for the exhibition, while every heart beat high with joyful expectation of the appointed day which was to usher in the favourite amusement.

You should be told, however, that Seville is acknowledged, on all hands, to have carried these fights to perfection. To her school of *bullmanship*, that art owes all its refinements. Bull-fighting is considered by many of our young men of fashion a high and becoming accomplishment; and mimicking the scenes of the amphitheatre forms the chief amusement among boys of all ranks in Anda-

lusia. The boy who personates the most important character in the drama — the bull — is furnished with a large piece of board, armed in front, with the natural weapons of the animal, and having handles fastened to the lower surface. By the last the boy keeps the machine steady on the top of the head, and with the former he unmercifully pushes such of his antagonists as are not dexterous enough to evade, or sufficiently swift to escape him. The fighters have small darts, pointed with pins, which they endeavour to fix on a piece of cork stuck flat on the horned board, till at length the bull falls, according to rule, at the touch of a wooden sword.

Our young country-gentlemen have a substitute for the regular bull-fights, much more approaching to reality. About the beginning of summer, the great breeders of black cattle—generally men of rank and fortune—send an invitation to their neighbours to be present at the trial of the yearlings, in order to select those that are to be reserved for the amphitheatre. The greatest festivity prevails at these meetings. A temporary scaffolding is raised round the walls of a very large court, for the accommodation of the ladies. The gentlemen attend on horseback, dressed in short loose jackets of silk, chintz, or dimity, the sleeves of which are not sewed to the body, but laced with broad ribbons of a suitable colour, swelling not ungracefully round the top of the shoulders. A profusion of hanging buttons, either silver or gold, mostly silver gilt,

twinkle in numerous rows round the wrists of both sexes. The saddles, called *Albardones*, to distinguish them from the peak-saddle, which is seldom used in Andalusia, rise about a foot before and behind in a triangular shape. The stirrups are iron boxes, open on both sides, and affording a complete rest the whole length of the foot. Both country-people and gentlemen riding in these saddles, use the stirrups so short, that, in defiance of all the rules of *manège*, the knees and toes project from the side of the horse, and, when galloping, the rider appears to kneel on its back. A white beaver-hat, of rather more than two feet diameter, fastened under the chin by a ribbon, was till lately worn at these sports, and is still used by the horsemen at the public exhibitions; but the *Montera* is now prevalent. I find it difficult to describe this part of the national dress without the aid of a drawing. Imagine, however, a bishop's mitre inverted, and closed on the side intended to receive the head. Conceive the two points of the mitre so shortened that, placed downwards on the skull, they scarcely cover the ears. Such is our national cap. Like Don Quixote's head-piece, the frame is made of paste-board. Externally it is black velvet, ornamented with silk frogs and tassels of the same colour.

Each of the cavaliers holds a lance, twelve feet in length, headed with a three-edged steel point. The weapon is called *Garrocha*, and it is used by

horsemen whenever they have to contend with the bulls, either in the fields or the amphitheatre. The steel, however, is sheathed by two strong leather rings, which are taken off in proportion to the strength of the bull, and the sort of wound which is intended. On the present occasion no more than half an inch of steel is uncovered. Double that length is allowed in the amphitheatre; though the spear is not intended to kill or disable the animal, but to keep him off by the painful pressure of the steel on a superficial wound. Such however, is the violence of the bulls when attacking the horses, that I once saw the blunt spear I have described, run along the neck into the body of the beast and kill him on the spot. But this is a rare occurrence, and foul play was suspected on the part of the man, who seems to have used more steel than the lance is allowed to be armed with.

The company being assembled in and round the rural arena, the one-year-old bulls are singly let in by the herdsmen. It might be supposed, that animals so young would be frightened at the approach of the horseman couching his spear before their eyes; but our Andalusian breeders expect better things from their favourites. A young bull must attack the horseman twice, bearing the point of the spear on his neck, before he is set apart for the bloody honours of the amphitheatre. Such as flinch from the trial are instantly thrown down by the herdsmen, and prepared for the yoke on the spot.

These scenes are often concluded with a more cruel sport, named *Derribar*. A strong bull is driven from the herd into the open field, where he is pursued at full gallop by the whole band of horsemen. The Spanish bull is a fleet animal, and the horses find it difficult to keep up with him at the first onset. When he begins, however, to slack in his course, the foremost spearsman, couching his lance, and aiming obliquely at the lower part of the spine, above the haunches, spurs his horse to his utmost speed, and, passing the bull, inflicts a wound, which, being exceedingly painful, makes him wince, lose his balance, and come down with a tremendous fall. The shock is so violent that the bull seems unable to rise for some time. It is hardly necessary to observe, that such feats require an uncommon degree of horsemanship, and the most complete presence of mind.

Our town itself abounds in amusements of this kind, where the professional bull-fighters learn their art, and the amateurs feast their eyes, occasionally joining in the sport with the very lowest of the people. You must know, by the way, that our town corporation enjoys the privilege of being our sole and exclusive butchers. They alone have a right to kill and sell meat; which, coming through their *noble* hands, (for this municipal government is entailed on the first Andalusian families) is the worst and dearest in the whole kingdom. Two droves of lean cattle are brought every week to a

large slaughter-house *(el matadero)* which stands between one of the city gates and the suburb of San Bernardo. To walk in that neighbourhood when the cattle approach is dangerous ; for, notwithstanding the emaciated condition of the animals, and though many are oxen and cows, a crowd is sure to collect on the plain, and by the waving of their cloaks, and a sharp whistling which they make through their fingers, they generally succeed in dispersing the drove, in order to single out the fiercest for their amusement. Nothing but the Spanish cloak is used on these occasions. Holding it gracefully at arm's length before the body, so as to conceal the person from the breast to the feet, they wave it in the eyes of the animal, shaking their heads with an air of defiance, and generally calling out *Ha ! Toro, Toro !* The bull pauses a moment before he rushes upon the nearest object. It is said that he shuts his eyes at the instant of pushing with his horns. The man keeping his cloak in the first direction, flings it over the head of the animal, while he glances his body to the left, just when the bull, led forward by the original impulse, must run on a few yards without being able to turn upon his adversary, whom, upon wheeling round, he finds prepared to delude him as before. This sport is exceedingly lively ; and when practised by proficients, seldom attended with danger. It is called *Capéo.* The whole population of San Bernardo, men, women and children, are adepts in this

art. Within the walls of the slaughter-house, however, is the place where the bull-fighters by profession are allowed to improve themselves. A member of the town corporation presides, and admits, gratis, his friends; among whom, notwithstanding the filth natural to such places, ladies do not disdain to appear. The *Matadero* is so well known as a school for bull-fighting, that it bears the cant appellation of the *College*. Many of our first noblesse have frequented no other school. Fortunately, this fashion is wearing away. Yet we have often seen Viscount Miranda, the head of one of the proudest families of the proud city of Cordova, step into the public amphitheatre, and kill a bull with his own hand. This gentleman had reared up one of his favourite animals, and accustomed him to walk into his parlour, to the great consternation of the company. The bull, however, once, in a surly mood, forgot his acquired tameness, and gored one of the servants to death; in consequence of which his master was compelled to kill him.

That Spanish gentlemen fight in public with bulls, I suppose you have heard or read. But this does not regularly take place, except at the coronation of our kings, and in their presence. Such noblemen as are able to engage in the perilous sport, volunteer their services for the sake of the reward, which is some valuable place under government, if they prefer it to an order of Knighthood.

They appear on horseback, attended by the first professional fighters, on foot, and use short spears with a broad blade, called *Rejones*.

A *Bull-day*, (Dia de Toros), as it is emphatically called at Seville, stops all public and private business. On the preceding afternoon, the amphitheatre is thrown open to all sorts of people indiscriminately. Bands of military music enliven the bustling scene. The seats are occupied by such as wish to see the promenade on the arena, round which the ladies parade in their carriages, while every man seems to take pleasure in moving on the same spot where the fierce combat is to take place within a few hours. The spirits of the company are, in fact, pitched up by anticipation to the gay, noisy, and bold temper of the future sport.

Our amphitheatre is one of the largest and handsomest in Spain, A great part is built of stone; but, from want of money, the rest is wood. From ten to twelve thousand spectators may be accommodated with seats. These rise, uncovered, from an elevation of about eight feet above the arena, and are finally crowned by a gallery, from whence the wealthy behold the fights, free from the inconveniences of the weather. The lowest tier, however, is preferred by the young gentlemen, as affording a clear view of the wounds inflicted on the bull. This tier is protected by a parapet. Another strong fence, six feet high, is erected round the arena, leaving a space of about twenty, between its area

and the lower seats. Openings, admitting a man sideways, are made in this fence, to allow the men on foot an escape when closely pursued by the bull. They, however, most generally leap over it, with uncommon agility. But bulls of a certain breed, will not be left behind, and literally clear the fence. Falling into the vacant space before the seats, the animal runs about till one of the gates is opened, through which he is easily drawn back to the arena.

Few among the lower classes retire to their beds on the eve of a *Bull-day*. From midnight they pour down the streets leading to the amphitheatre, in the most riotous and offensive manner, to be present at the Encierro—*shutting-in* of the bulls—which being performed at the break of day, is allowed to be seen without paying for seats. The devoted animals are conducted from their native fields to a large plain in the neighbourhood of Seville, from whence eighteen, the number exhibited daily during the feasts, are led to the amphitheatre, on the appointed day, that long confinement may not break down their fierceness. This operation has something extremely wild in its character. All the amateurs of the town are seen on horseback with their lances hastening towards Tablada, the spot where the bulls are kept at large. The herdsmen, on foot, collect the victims of the day into a drove; this they do by means of tame oxen, called *Cabestros*, taught to be led by a haulter, carrying,

tied round their neck, a large deep-sounding bell, with a wooden clapper. What the habit of following the bells of the leaders fails to do, the cracking of the herdsmen's slings is sure to perform, when the animals are not driven to madness. The horsemen, also, stand on all sides of the drove till they get into a round trot. Thus they proceed to within half a mile of the amphitheatre. At that distance a path is closed up on both sides, with stout poles, tied horizontally across upright stakes —a feeble rampart, indeed, against the fury of a herd of wild bulls. Yet the Sevillian mob, though fully aware of the danger, are mad enough to take pleasure in exposing themselves. The intolerable noise in my street, and the invitation of a Member of the *Maestranza*—a corporate association of noblemen, whose object is the breeding and breaking of horses, and who in this town enjoy the exclusive privilege of giving bull-feasts to the public—induced me, during the last season, to get up one morning with the dawn, and take my stand at the amphitheatre, where, from their private gallery, I commanded a view of the plain lying between the river Guadalquivir and that building.

At the distant sound of the oxen's bells, shoals of people were seen driving wildly over the plain, like clouds before a strong gale. One could read in their motions, a struggle between fear on one side, and vanity and habit on the other. Now they approached the palisade, now they ran to a more

distant spot. Many climbed up the trees, while the more daring or fool-hardy, kept their station on what they esteemed a post of honour. As our view was terminated by a narrow pass between the river and the ancient tower called *del Oro*, or Golden, the cavalcade broke upon us with great effect. It approached at full gallop. The leading horsemen, now confined within the palisades, and having the whole herd at their heels, were obliged to run for their lives. Few, however, ventured on this desperate service, and their greatest force was in the rear. The herdsmen clinging to the necks of the oxen, in order to keep pace with the horses, appeared, to an unpractised eye, doomed to inevitable destruction. The cries of the multitude, the sound of numberless horns, made of the hollow stem of a large species of thistle, the shrill and penetrating whistling, which seems most to harass and enrage the bulls, together with the confused and rapid motion of the scene, could hardly be endured without a degree of dizziness. It often happens, that the boldest of the mob succeed in decoying a bull from the drove; but I was, this time, fortunate enough to see them safely lodged in the *Toril*—a small court divided into a series of compartments with drop-gates, in the form of sluices, into which they are successively goaded from a surrounding gallery, and lodged singly till the time of letting them lose upon the arena.

The custom of this town requires that a bull be

given to the populace immediately after the *shutting-in*. The irregular fight that ensues is perfectly disgusting and shocking. The only time I have witnessed it, the area of the amphitheatre was actually crowded with people, both on horse and foot. Fortunately their numbers distracted the animal: on whatever side he charged, large masses ran before him, on which he would have made a dreadful havock, but for the multitude which drew his attention to another spot. Yet one of the crowd, evidently in a state of intoxication, who stood still before the bull, was tossed up to a great height, and fell apparently dead. He would have been gored to pieces before our eyes, had not the herdsmen and some other good fighters, drawn away the beast with their cloaks.

Such horrors are frequent at these irregular fights; yet neither the cruelty of the sport, nor the unnecessary danger to which even the most expert bull-fighters expose their lives, nor the debauch and profligacy attendant on such exhibitions, are sufficient to rouse the zeal of our fanatics against them. Our popular preachers have succeeded twice, within my recollection, in shutting up the theatre. I have myself seen a friar with a crucifix in his hand, stop at its door, at the head of an evening procession; and, during a considerable part of the performance, conjure the people, as they valued their souls, not to venture into that abode of sin; but I never heard from these holy

guardians of morals the least observation against bull-fighting: and even our *high-flyers* in devotion —the *Philippians*,* whom we might call our Methodists, allow all, except clergymen, to attend these bloody scenes, while they deny absolution to any who do not renounce the play.

Before quitting the amphitheatre I was taken by my friend to the gallery from which the bulls were goaded into their separate stalls. As it stands only two or three feet above their heads, I could not but feel a degree of terror at such a close view of these fiery savage eyes, those desperate efforts to reach the beholders, accompanied by repeated and ferocious bellowings. There is an intelligence and nobleness in the lion that makes him look much less terrific in his den. I saw the *Divisa*, a bunch of ribbons tied to a barbed steel point, stuck into the bulls' necks. It is intended to distinguish the breeds by different combinations of colours, which are stated in handbills, sold about the streets like your court-calendars before the assizes.

Ten is the appointed hour to begin the morning exhibition; and such days are fixed upon as will not, by a long church-service, prevent the attendance of the canons and prebendaries, who choose to be present; for the chapter, in a body, receive a regular invitation from the *Maestranza*. Such, therefore, as have secured seats, may stay at home

* See Letter III. p. 77.

till the tolling of the great bell announces the elevation of the host—a ceremony which takes place near the conclusion of the daily morning service.

The view of the Seville amphitheatre, when full, is very striking. Most people attend in the Andalusian dress, part of which I have already described. The colour of the men's cloaks, which are of silk, in the fine season, varies from purple to scarlet. The short loose jackets of the men display the most lively hues, and the white veils which the females generally wear at these meetings, tell beautifully with the rest of their gay attire.

The clearing of the arena, on which a multitude lounges till the last moment, is part of the show, and has the appropriate appellation of *Despejo*. This is performed by a battalion of infantry. The soldiers entering at one of the gates in a column, display their ranks, at the sound of martial music, and sweep the people before them as they march across the ground. This done, the gates are closed, the soldiers perform some evolutions, in which the commanding officer is expected to shew his ingenuity, till, having placed his men in a convenient position, they disband in a moment, and hide themselves behind the fence.

The band of *Toreros* (bull-fighters), one half in blue, the other in scarlet cloaks, now advance in two lines across the arena, to make obeisance to the president. Their number is generally twelve or fourteen, including the two *Matadores*, each at-

tended by an assistant called *Mediaespada* (demi-sword). Close in their rear follow the *Picadores* (pikemen) on horseback, wearing scarlet jackets trimmed with silver lace. The shape of the horsemen's jackets resembles those in use among the English postboys. As a protection to the legs and thighs, they have strong leather overalls, stuffed to an enormous size with soft brown paper—a substance which is said to offer great resistance to the bull's horns. After making their bow to the president, the horsemen take their post in a line to the left of the gate which is to let in the bulls, standing in the direction of the barrier at the distance of thirty or forty paces from each other. The fighters on foot, without any weapon or means of defence, except their cloaks, wait, not far from the horses, ready to give assistance to the pikemen. Every thing being thus in readiness, a constable, in the ancient Spanish costume, rides up to the front of the principal gallery, and receives into his hat the key of the *Toril* or bull's den, which the president flings from the balcony. Scarcely has the constable delivered the key under the steward's gallery, when, at the waving of the president's handkerchief, the bugles sound amid a storm of applause, the gates are flung open, and the first bull rushes into the amphitheatre. I shall describe what, on the day I allude to, our connoisseurs deemed an interesting fight, and if you imagine it repeated, with more or less danger and carnage,

eight times in the morning and ten in the evening, you will have a pretty accurate notion of the whole performance.

The bull paused a moment and looked wildly upon the scene; then, taking notice of the first horseman, made a desperate charge against him. The ferocious animal was received at the point of the pike, which, according to the laws of the game, was aimed at the fleshy part of the neck. A dextrous motion of the bridle-hand and right leg made the horse evade the bull's horn, by turning to the left. Made fiercer by the wound, he instantly attacked the next pikeman, whose horse, less obedient to the rider, was so deeply gored in the chest that he fell dead on the spot. The impulse of the bull's thrust threw the rider on the other side of the horse. An awful silence ensued. The spectators, rising from their seats, beheld in fearful suspense the wild bull goring the fallen horse, while the man, whose only chance of safety depended on lying motionless, seemed dead to all appearance. This painful scene lasted but a few seconds; for the men on foot, by running towards the bull, in various directions, waving their cloaks and uttering loud cries, soon made him quit the horse to pursue them. When the danger of the pikeman was passed, and he rose on his legs to vault upon another horse, the burst of applause might be heard at the farthest extremity of the town. Dauntless, and urged by revenge, he now

galloped forth to meet the bull. But, without detailing the shocking sights that followed, I shall only mention that the ferocious animal attacked the horsemen ten successive times, wounded four horses and killed two. One of these noble creatures, though wounded in two places, continued to face the bull without shrinking, till growing too weak, he fell down with the rider. Yet these horses are never trained for the fights; but are bought for the amount of thirty or forty shillings, when, worn out with labour, or broken by disease, they are unfit for any other service.

A flourish of the bugles discharged the horsemen till the beginning of the next combat, and the amusement of the people devolved on the *Banderilleros*—the same whom we have hitherto seen attentive to the safety of the horsemen. The *Banderilla*, literally, little flag, from which they take their name, is a shaft of two feet in length, pointed with a barbed steel, and gaily ornamented with many sheets of painted paper, cut into reticulated coverings. Without a cloak, and holding one of these darts in each hand, the fighter runs up to the bull, and stopping short when he sees himself attacked, fixes the two shafts, without flinging them, behind the horns of the beast at the very moment when it stoops to toss him. The painful sensation makes the bull throw up his head without inflicting the intended blow, and while he rages in impotent endeavours to shake off the

hanging darts that gall him, the man has full leisure to escape. It is on these occasions, when the *Banderilleros* fail to fix the darts, that they require their surprising swiftness of foot. Being without the protection of a cloak, they are obliged to take instantly to flight. The bull follows them at full gallop; and I have seen the man leap the barrier, so closely pursued by the enraged brute, that it seemed as if he had sprung up by placing the feet on its head. Townsend thought it was literally so. Some of the darts are set with squibs and crackers. The match, a piece of tinder, made of a dried fungus, is so fitted to the barbed point, that, rising by the pressure which makes it penetrate the skin, it touches the train of the fireworks. The only object of this refinement of cruelty is, to confuse the bull's instinctive powers, and, by making him completely frantic, to diminish the danger of the *Matador*, who is never so exposed as when the beast is collected enough to meditate the attack.

At the waving of the president's handkerchief, the bugles sounded the death-signal, and the *Matador* came forward. *Pepe Illo*, the pride of this town, and certainly one of the most graceful and dextrous fighters that Spain has ever produced, having flung off his cloak, approached the bull with a quick, light, and fearless step. In his left hand he held a square piece of red cloth, spread upon a staff about two feet in length, and in his

right, a broad sword not much longer. His attendants followed him at a distance. Facing the bull, within six or eight yards, he presented the red flag, keeping his body partially concealed behind it, and the sword entirely out of view. The bull rushed against the red cloth, and our hero slipped by his side by a slight circular motion, while the beast passed under the lure which the *Matador* held in the first direction, till he had evaded the horns. Enraged by this deception, and unchecked by any painful sensation, the bull collected all his strength for a desperate charge. Pepe Illo now levelled his sword, at the left side of the bull's neck, and, turning upon his right foot as the animal approached him, ran the weapon nearly up to the hilt into its body. The bull staggered, tottered, and dropped gently upon his bent legs ; but had yet too much life in him for any man to venture near with safety.—The unfortunate *Illo* has since perished from a wound inflicted by a bull in a similar state. The *Matador* observed, for one or two minutes, the signs of approaching death in the fierce animal now crouching before him, and at his bidding, an attendant crept behind the bull and struck him dead, by driving a small poniard at the jointure of the spine and the head. This operation is never performed, except when the prostrate bull lingers. I once saw *Illo*, at the desire of the spectators, inflict this merciful blow in a manner which nothing but ocular demonstration would have

made me believe. Taking the poniard, called *Puntilla*, by the blade, he poised it for a few moments, and jerked it with such unerring aim on the bull's neck, as he lay on his bent legs, that he killed the animal with the quickness of lightning.

Four mules, ornamented with large morrice-bells and ribbons, harnessed a-breast, and drawing a beam furnished with an iron hook in the middle, galloped to the place where the bull lay. This machine being fastened to a rope previously thrown round the dead animal's horns, he was swiftly dragged out of the amphitheatre.

I have now given you a more minute, and, I trust, more correct description of every thing connected with the bull-fights than has ever been drawn by any traveller. Townsend's is the best account of these sports I ever met with; yet it is not free from mistakes. So difficult is it to see distinctly, scenes with which we are not familiarly acquainted.

The risk of the fighters is great, and their dexterity alone prevents its being imminent. The lives most exposed are those of the *Matadores*; and few of them have retired in time to avoid a tragical end. Bull fighters rise from the dregs of the people. Like most of their equals, they unite superstition and profligacy in their character. None of them will venture upon the arena without a *scapulary*, two small square pieces of cloth suspended by ribbons, on the breast and back, between the shirt

and the waistcoat. In the front square there is a print, on linen, of the Virgin Mary—generally, the *Carmel* Mary, who is the patron goddess of all the rogues and vagabonds in Spain. These scapularies are blessed, and sold by the Carmelite Friars. Our great *Matador*, Pepe Illo, besides the usual amulet, trusted for safety to the patronage of St. Joseph, whose chapel adjoins the Seville amphitheatre. The doors of this chapel were, during Illo's life, thrown open as long as the fight continued, the image of the Saint being all that time encircled by a great number of lighted wax-candles, which the devout gladiator provided at his own expense. The Saint, however, unmindful of this homage, allowed his client often to be wounded, and finally left him to his fate at Madrid.

To enjoy the spectacle I have described, the feelings must be greatly perverted ; yet that degree of perversion is very easily accomplished. The display of courage and address which is made at these exhibitions, and the contagious nature of all emotions in numerous assemblies, are more than sufficient to blunt, in a short time, the natural disgust arising from the first view of blood and slaughter. If we consider that even the Vestals at Rome were passionately fond of gladiatorial shows, we shall not be surprised at the Spanish taste for sports which, with infinite less waste of human life, can give rise to the strongest emotions.

The following instance, with which I shall con-

clude, will shew you to what degree the passion for bull-fights can grow. A gentleman of my acquaintance had some years ago the misfortune to lose his sight. It might be supposed, that a blind man would avoid the scene of his former enjoyment —a scene where every thing is addressed to the eye. This gentleman, however, is a constant attendant at the amphitheatre. Morning and evening he takes his place with the *Maestranza*, of which he is a member, having his guide by his side. Upon the appearance of every bull, he greedily listens to the description of the animal, and of all that takes place in the fight. His mental conception of the exhibition, aided by the well known cries of the multitude, is so vivid, that when a burst of applause allows his attendant just to hint at the event that drew it from the spectators, the unfortunate man's face gleams with pleasure, and he echoes the last clappings of the circus.

LETTER V.

Seville, —— 1801.

THE calamity which has afflicted this town and swept away eighteen thousand of its inhabitants,* will more than sufficiently account for my long silence. But, during the interruption of my correspondence, there is a former period for which I owe you a more detailed explanation.

My travels in Spain have hitherto been as limited as is used among my countrymen. The expense, the danger, and the great inconvenience attending a journey, prevent our travelling for pleasure or curiosity. Most of our people spend their whole lives within their province, and few among the females have ever lost sight of the town that gave them birth. I have, however, brought home some of your English restlessness; and, as my dear friend, the young clergyman, whose account of himself

* The yellow fever in 1800.

is already in your hands, had to visit a very peculiar spot of Andalusia, I joined him most willingly in his excursion, during which I collected a few traits of our national manners, with a view to add one more to my preceding sketches.

My friend's destination was a town in the mountains or Sierra de Ronda, called Olbera, or Olvera, for we make no difference in the pronunciation of the *b* and the *v*. A young man of that town had been elected to a fellowship of this *Colégio Mayór*; and my friend, who is a member of that body, was the appointed commissioner for collecting the *pruebas*, or evidence, which, according to the statutes, must be taken at the birth-place of the candidate, concerning the purity of his blood and family connexions. The badness of the roads, in that direction, induced us to make the whole journey on horseback. We were provided with the coarse dress which country gentlemen wear on similar occasions—a short loose jacket and smallclothes of brown serge; thick leather gaiters; a cloak tied up in a roll on the pommel of the saddle; and a stout spencer, ornamented with a kind of patchwork lace, made of pieces of various colours, which is a favourite riding-dress of our Andalusian beaux. Each of us, as well as the servant, whose horse carried our light luggage, was armed with a musket, hanging by a hook, on a ring, which all travelling-saddles are furnished with for that purpose. This manner of travelling is, upon the

whole, the most pleasant in Andalusia. Robbers seldom attack people on horseback, provided they take care, as we did, never to pass any wooded ground without separating to the distance of a musket-shot from each other.

My fellow-traveller took this opportunity to pay a visit to some of his acquaintance at Osuna, a town of considerable wealth, with a numerous *noblesse*, a collegiate church, and a university. At the end of our first days' journey we stopped at a pretty populous village called El Arahal. The inn, though far from comfortable, in the English sense of the word, was not one of the worst we were doomed to endure in our tour, ; for travellers were not here obliged to starve if they had not brought their own provisions ; and we had a room with a few broken chairs, a deal table and two flock beds, laid upon planks raised from the brick-floor by iron tressels. A dish of ham and eggs afforded us an agreeable and substantial dinner, and a bottle of cheap, but by no means unpleasant wine, made us forget the jog-trot of our day's journey.

We had just felt the approach of that peculiar kind of *ennui* which lurks in every corner of an inn, when the sound of a fife and drum, with more of the sporting and mirthful than of the military character, awakened our curiosity. But to ask a question, even at the best Spanish *fonda* (hotel), you must either exert your lungs, calling the waiter,

chambermaid, and landlord, in succession, to multiply the chances of finding one disposed to hear you; or adopt the more quiet method of searching them through the house, beginning at the kitchen. Here, however, we had only to step out of our room and we found ourselves within the cook's dominions. The best country inns, indeed, consist of a large hall contiguous to the street or road, and paved like the former with round stones. At one end of this hall there is a large hearth, raised about a foot from the ground. A wood-fire is constantly burning upon it, and travellers of all ranks and degrees, who do not prefer moping in their cold, unglazed rooms, are glad to take a seat near it, where they enjoy, gratis, the wit and humour of carriers, coachmen, and clowns, and a close view of the hostess or her maid, dressing successively in the same frying pan, now an omelet of eggs and onions, now a dish of dried fish with oil and love-apples, or it may be the limbs of a tough fowl which but a few moments before had been strutting about the house. The doors of the bed-rooms, as well as that of the stable-yard, all open into the hall. Leaving a sufficient space for carriages and horses to cross from the front door to the stables, the Spanish carriers, or *harrieros*, who travel in parties of twenty or thirty men and double that number of mules, range themselves at night along the walls, each upon his large packsaddle, with no

other covering but a kind of horse-cloth, called *manta*, which they use on the road to keep them dry and warm in winter.

Into this truly common-hall were we brought by the sound of the drum, and soon learned from one of the loungers who sauntered about it, that a company of strolling-players were in a short time to begin their performance. This was good news indeed for us, who, unwilling to go early to bed with a certainty of not being allowed to sleep, dreaded the close of approaching night. The performance, we were told, was to take place in an open court, where a cow-house, open in front, afforded a convenient situation both for the stage and the dressing-room of the actors. Having each of us paid the amount of a penny and a fraction, we took our seats under a bright starry sky, muffled up in our cloaks, and perfectly unmindful of the danger which might arise from the extreme airiness of the theatre. A horrible screaming fiddle, a grumbling violoncello, and a deafening French-horn, composed the band. The drop-curtain consisted of four counterpanes sewed together; and the scenes, which were red gambroon curtains, hanging loose from a frame, and flapping in the wind, let us into the secrets of the dressing-room, where the actors, unable to afford a different person for every character, multiplied themselves by the assistance of the tailor.

The play was *El Diablo Predicador*—" The Devil

turned Preacher"—one of the numerous dramatic compositions published anonymously during the latter part of the Austrian dynasty. The character of this comedy is so singular, and so much of the public mind may be learned from its popularity all over the country, that I will give you an abstract of the plot.

The hero of the play, designated in the Dramatis Personæ by the title of *primer galan* (first gallant), is *Lucifer*, who, dressed in a suit of black velvet and scarlet stockings—the appropriate stage-dress of devils, of whatever rank and station—appears in the first scene mounted upon a griffin, summoning his confidant *Asmodeus* out of a trap, to acquaint him with the danger to which the newly-established order of Saint Francis exposed the whole kingdom of darkness. Italy (according to the arch-demon) was overrun with mendicant friars; and even Lucca, the scene of the play, where they had met with a sturdy opposition, might, he feared, consent to the building of a Franciscan convent, the foundations of which were already laid. Lucifer, therefore, determines to assist the Lucchese in dislodging the cowled enemies from that town; and he sends Asmodeus to Spain upon a similar service. The chief engine he puts in motion is *Ludovico*, a wealthy and hard-hearted man, who had just married *Octavia*, a paragon of virtue and beauty, thus cruelly sacrificed by her father's ambition. *Feliciano*, a cousin of Octavia,

and the object of her early affection, availing himself of the husband's ignorance of their now-broken engagement, makes his appearance at Lucca with the determination of seducing the bride and taking revenge on Ludovico. The *Guardian* of the new convent of Saint Francis, being obliged by the rule of his order to support the friars by daily alms collected from the people, and finding the inhabitants of Lucca determined to starve them out of their city, applies to Ludovico for help. That wicked man thrusts the Guardian and his lay-brother *Antolin*—the *gracioso* of the play—out of the house, to be hooted and pelted by the mob. Nothing, therefore, is left for the friars but to quit the town: and now, the poet considering Horace's rule for supernatural interference as perfectly applicable to such a desperate state of things, the *Niño Dios* (the Child God),* and *Michael the archangel*, come down in a cloud (you will readily conceive that the actors at our humble theatre dispensed with the machinery), and the last, addressing himself to Lucifer, gives him a peremptory order to assume the habit of Saint Francis, and under that disguise to stop all the mischief he had devised against Octavia; to obtain support from the people of Lucca for the Franciscans; and not to depart till he had built two convents instead of the one he was trying to nip in the bud.

* See Note F.

To give, as you say in England, the Devil his due, it must be confessed, that Lucifer, though now and then exclaiming against the severity of his punishment, executes his commission with exemplary zeal. He presents himself to the Guardian, in the garb of the order, and having Brother Antolín appointed as his attendant, soon changes the hearts of the people, and obtains abundant supplies for the convent. The under-plot proceeds in the mean time, involving Octavia in the most imminent dangers. She snatches from Feliciano a letter, in which she had formerly avowed her love to him, which, imperfectly torn to pieces, falls into Ludovico's hands, and induces him to plan her death. To accomplish this purpose, he takes her into the country, and stabs her in the depth of a forest, a few minutes before Monk Lucifer, who fairly and honestly had intended to prevent the blow, could arrive at the place with his lay-companion.

To be thus taken by surprise puzzles the ex-archangel not a little. Still he observes, that since Octavia's soul had neither gone to heaven, purgatory, nor hell, a miracle was on the point of being performed. Nor was he deceived in this shrewd conjecture; for the *Virgin Mary* descends in a cloud, and touching the body of Octavia, restores her to life. Feliciano arriving at this moment, attributes the miracle to the two friars; and the report of this wonder exposes Antolín to a ludicrous mobbing in the town, where his frock is

torn to pieces to keep the shreds as relics. Lucifer now endeavours to prove to the resuscitated wife, that, according to the canon law, her marriage has been dissolved by death ; but she, distrusting the casuistry of that learned personage, immediately returns to her husband. Her unwilling protector is therefore compelled to prevent a second death, which the desperate Ludovico intends to inflict upon his too faithful wife. After this second rescue of the beautiful Octavia, Lucifer makes a most edifying address, urging Ludovico to redeem his sins, by giving alms to the Franciscans. His eloquence, however, making no impression upon the miser, Saint Michael gives the word from behind the scenes, and the obdurate man is swallowed up by the earth. Michael now makes his appearance ; and, upon a very sensible remonstance of Lucifer, as to the hardship of his present case, he allows the latter to strip off the cowl, and carry on hostilities against the Franciscans by the usual arts he employs against the other religious orders, *i.e.* assaulting the monks' virtue by any means except their stomachs. Food the Franciscans must never want, according to the heavenly promise made to their founder.

This curious play is performed, at least once a year, on every Spanish theatre; when the Franciscan friars, instead of enforcing the standing rule, which forbids the exhibition of the monkish dress upon the stage, regularly lend the requisite suits to

the actors: so favourable is the impression it leaves in favour of that mendicant order.

Our trüly Thespian entertainment was just concluded, when we heard the church-bell toll what in Spain is called *Las Animas*—the Souls. A man, bearing a large lantern with a painted glass, representing two naked persons enveloped in flames, entered the court, addressing every one of the company in these words:—*The Holy Souls, Brother! Remember the Holy Souls.* Few refused the petitioner a copper coin, worth about the eighth part of a penny. This custom is universal in Spain. A man, whose chief employment is to be agent for the souls in purgatory, in the evening—the only time when the invisible sufferers are begged for about the towns—and for some saint or *Madonna*, during the day, parades the streets after sunset, with the lantern I have described, and never fails to visit the inns, where the travellers, who generally entrust their safety from robbers to the *holy souls*, are always ready to make some pecuniary acknowldegement for past favours, or to engage their protection in future dangers. The tenderness of all sorts of *believing* Spaniards for the souls in purgatory, and the reliance they place on their intercession with God, would almost be affecting, did it not originate in the most superstitious credulity.

The doctrine of purgatory is very easily, nay, consistently embraced by such as believe in the

expiatory nature of pain and suffering. The best feelings of our hearts are, besides, most ready to assist the imagination in devising means to keep up an intercourse with that invisible world, which either possesses already, or must soon possess, whatever has engaged our affections in this. Grief for a departed friend loses half its bitterness with a Catholic who can firmly believe that not a day shall pass without repeated and effectual proofs of attachment, on his part, till he join the conscious object of his love in bliss. While other articles of the Catholic faith are too refined and abstract for children, their tender and benevolent minds eagerly seize on the idea of purgatory fire. A parent or a brother, still kind to them in another world, yet suffering excruciating pains that may be relieved, shortened, and perhaps put an end to by some privation or prayer, are notions perfectly adapted to their capacity and feelings. Every year brings round the day devoted by the church to the relief of the departed souls. The holy vestments used at the three masses, which, by a special grant, every priest is allowed to perform that morning, are black. Large candles of yellow wax are placed over the graves within the churches ; and even the church-yards, those humble places of repose appointed among us for criminals and paupers, are not neglected on that day of revived sorrows. Light are provided for them at the expense of the society established in every town of Spain for the

relief of the friendless spirits, who, for want of assistance, may be lingering in the purifying flames; and many of the members, with a priest at their head, visit these cemeteries for nine successive evenings.

Thus, even benevolence, under the guidance of superstition, degenerates into absurdity. It does not, however, stop here; but, rushing headlong into the ludicrous, forces a smile upon the face of sympathy, and painfully compels our mirth where our tears were ready to flow. The religious ingenuity of the Catholics has gone so far as to publish the scheme of a lottery for the benefit of such souls as might otherwise escape their notice. It consists of a large sheet of paper fixed in a frame, with an open box beneath it. Under different heads, numbered from one to ninety, the inventor of this pious game has distributed the most interesting cases which can occur in the *debtors' side* of the infernal Newgate, allotting to each a prayer, penance or offering. In the box are deposited ninety pieces of card, distinguished by numbers corresponding to the ninety classes. According as the pious gambler draws the tickets, he performs the meritorious works enjoined in the scheme—generally a short prayer or slight penance—transferring their spiritual value to the fortunate souls to whom each card belongs. Often in my childhood, have I amused myself at this good-natured game. But the Inquisition is growing fastidious;

and though the *lottery of purgatory* is as fairly grounded on the doctrines of Rome, as the papal bulls for the release of suffering souls, which are sold for sixpence, with a blank for inserting the name of the person in whose behalf it is purchased; the inquisitors, it seems, will not allow the liberation of the departed to become a matter of chance, and the *lottery scheme* has lately been prohibited. Fortunately, we still have various means of assisting our friends in *Hades;* for, besides masses, Bulls, prayers, and penances, the Pope has established eight or ten days in the year, on which every Spaniard (for the grant is confined to Spain) by kneeling at five different altars, and there praying for the *extirpation of heresy*, is entitled to send a species of *habeas animam* writ to any of his friends in purgatory. The name of the person whose liberation is intended should, for fear of mistakes, be mentioned in the prayers. But, lest the order of release should find him already free, or perhaps within those gates to which no Pope has ever ventured to apply his keys, we are taught to endorse the spiritual bill with other names, addressing it finally to the *most worthy and disconsolate.*

These privileged days are announced to the public by a printed notice, placed over the bason of holy water, which stands near every church-door; and, as no one enters without wetting his forehead with the blessed fluid, there is no fear that the happy season should pass unheeded by

the pious. The words written on the tablet are plain and peremptory: *Hoy se saca Anima*; literally, "This is a soul-drawing day." We must, however, proceed on our uninterrupted journey.

Osuna, where we arrived on the second day after leaving Seville, is built on the declivity of one of the detached hills which stand as out-posts to the Sierra de Ronda, having in front a large ill-cultivated plain, from whence the principal church, and the college, to which the university of that town is attached, are seen to great advantage. The great square of the town is nearly surrounded by an arcade or piazza, with balconies above it, and is is altogether not unlike a large theatre. Such squares are to be found in every large town of Spain, and seem to have been intended for the exhibition of tournaments and a kind of bull-fights, less fierce and bloody than those of the amphitheatre, which bear the name of *regocijos* (rejoicings.)

The line of distinction between the *noblesse* and the unprivileged class being here drawn with the greatest precision, there cannot be a more disagreeable place for such as are, by education, above the lower ranks, yet have the misfortune of a plebeian birth. An honest respectable labourer without ambition, yet with a conscious dignity of mind not uncommon among the Spanish peasantry, may, in this respect, well be an object of envy to many of his betters. Gentlemen treat them with a less haughty and distant air than is used in England to-

wards inferiors and dependents. A *rabadán* (chief shepherd), or an *aperador* (steward), is always indulged with a seat when speaking on business with his master, and men of the first distinction will have a kind word for every peasant, when riding about the country. Yet they will exclude from their club and billiard table a well-educated man, because, forsooth, he has no legal title to a Don before his name.

This town, though one of the third order, supports three convents of friars and two of nuns. A gentleman of this place who, being a clergyman, enjoys a high reputation as a spiritual director, introduced us to some of the ladies at the nunneries. By this means I became acquainted with two very remarkable characters—a worker of miracles, and a nun in despair (*monja desesperada*). The first was an elderly woman, whose countenance and manners betrayed no symptoms of mental weakness , and whom, from all I was able to learn, it would be difficult to class either with the deceiving or deceived. The firm persuasion of her companions that she is sometimes the object, sometimes the instrument of supernatural operations, inspires them with a respect bordering upon awe. It would be tedious to relate the alleged instances of her prying into futurity, and searching the recesses of the heart. Reports like these are indeed easily raised and propagated : but I shall briefly relate one, which shows how stories of this kind

may get abroad through the most respectable channels, and form a chain of evidence which ingenuity cannot trace up to involuntary error, and candour would not attribute to deliberate falsehood.

The community of the *Descalzas* (unshod nuns) had more than once been thrown into great consternation on seeing their prioress—for to that office had her sanctity raised the subject of my story—reduced, for many days together, to absolute abstinence from food and drink. Though prostrate, and with hardly any power of motion, she was in full possession of her speech and faculties. Dr. Carnero, a physician well known in these parts for skill and personal respectability, attended the patient, for though it was firmly believed by the nuns that human art could not reach the disease, it is but justice to say, that no attempts were visible to give it a supernatural character among strangers. The doctor, who seems to have at first considered the case as a nervous affection, wished to try the effect of a decided effort of the patient under the influence of his presence and authority; for among nuns the physician is next in influence to the professor. Having therefore sent for a glass of water, and desiring the attendants to bolster up the prioress into a sitting posture, he put it into her hand, with a peremptory injunction to do her utmost to drink. The unresisting nun put the water to her lips, and stopped. The physician

was urging her to proceed, when to his great amazement he found the contents of the glass reduced to one lump of ice.—We had the account of this wonder from the clergyman who introduced us to the nun. Of his veracity I can entertain no doubt: while he, on the other hand, was equally confident of Dr. Carnero's.

Our visit to the other convent made me acquainted with one of the most pitiable objects ever produced by superstition—a reluctant nun. Of the actual existence of such miserable beings one seldom hears in Spain. A sense of decorum, and the utter hopelessness of relief, keep the bitter regrets of many an imprisoned female a profound secret to all but their confessor. In the present case, however, the vehemence of the sufferer's feelings had laid open to the world the state of her harassed mind. She was a good-looking woman, of little more than thirty: but the contrast between the monastic weeds, and an indescribable air of wantonness which, in spite of all caution, marked her every glance and motion, raised a mixed feeling of disgust and pity, that made us uncomfortable during the whole visit. We had, nevertheless, to stay till the customary refreshments of preserves, cakes, and chocolate were served from within the double grate that divided us from the inhabitants of the convent. This is done by means of a semicircular wooden frame which fills up an opening in the wall: the frame turns upon its centre, presenting alternately its concave and its

convex side. The refreshments being placed within the hollow part, a slight impulse of the hand places them within reach of the visitors. This machine takes the name of *torno,* from its rotatory motion. But I must leave the convents for a future letter.

After a few days not unpleasantly spent at Osuna, we proceeded to Olbera. The roads through all the branches of the Sierra de Ronda, though often wild and romantic, are generally execrable. A mistake of our servant had carried us within two miles of a villiage called Pruna, when we were overtaken by a tremendous storm of hail and thunder. Rain succeeded in torrents, and forced us to give up all idea of reaching our destination that evening. We, consequently, made for the village, anxious to dry our clothes, which were perfectly wet through; but so wretched was the inn, that it had not a room where we could retire to undress. In this awkward situation, my friend as a clergyman, thought of applying to the vicar, who, upon learning his name, very civilly received us in his house. The dress of this worthy priest, a handsome man of about forty, shewed that he was at least as fond of his gun and pointer, as of his missal. He had a little of the swaggering manner of Andalusia, but it was softened by a frankness and a gentleman-like air, which we little expected in a retired Spanish vicar. The fact is, that the livings being poor, none but the sons of tradesmen or peasants have, till very lately, entered the church, without well-grounded hopes of obtaining at once a place among the dignified clergy.

But I should rather say that the real *vicars* are exempted from the care of a parish, and, under the the name of *beneficiados,* receive the tithes, and spend them how and where they please. The nomination of curates belongs to the bishops; some of whom, much to the credit of the Spanish prelacy, have of late contrived to raise their income, and thereby induced a few young men, who, not long ago would have disdained the office, to take a parish under their care. The superiority, however, which was visible in our host, arose from his being what is known by the name of *cura y beneficiado,* or having a church, of which, as is sometimes the case, the incumbency is inseparable from the curacy. He was far above his neighbours in wealth and consequence; and being fond of field sports and freedom, he preferred the wild spot where he had been born, to a more splendid station in a Spanish cathedral.

The principal, or rather the most frequented, room in the vicar's house was, as usual, the kitchen or great hall at the entrance. A well-looking woman, about five and thirty, with a very pretty daughter of fifteen, and a peasant-girl to do the drudgery of the house, formed the canonical establishment of this happy son of St. Peter. To scrutinize the relation in which these ladies stood to the priest, the laws of hospitality would forbid; while to consider them as mere servants, we shrewdly guessed, would have hurt the feelings of the vicar. Having therefore, with becoming

gallantry, wound ourselves into their good graces, we found no difficulty, when supper was served up, in making them take their occustomed places, which, under some pretence, they now seemed prepared to decline.

Our hearty meal ended, the *alcalde*, the *escribano* (attorney), and three or four of the more substantial farmers, dropped in to their nightly *tertulia*. As the vicar saw no professional squeamishness in my reverend companion, he had no hesitation to acquaint us with the established custom of the house, which was to play at *faro* till bed-time; and we joined the party. A green glazed earthen jar, holding a quart of brandy, flavoured with anise, was placed at the foot of the vicar, and a glass before each of the company. The inhabitants of the Sierra de Ronda are fond of spirits, and many exceptions to the general abstemiousness of the Spaniards are found among them. But we did not observe any excess in our party. Probably the influence of the clergyman, and the presence of strangers kept all within the strictest rules of decorum. Next morning, after taking a cup of chocolate, and cordially thanking our kind host, we took horse for Olbera.

Some miles from that village, we passed one of the extensive woods of ilex, which are found in many parts of Spain. In summer, the beauty of these forests is very great. Wild flowers of all kinds, myrtles, honeysuckles, cystus, &c. grow in

the greatest profusion, and ornament a scene doubly delicious from the cool shade which succeeds to the glare of open and desolate plains, under a burning sun. Did not the monumental crosses, erected on every spot where a traveller has fallen by the hands of robbers, bring gloomy ideas to the mind, and keep the eye watching every turn, and scouring every thicket, without allowing it to repose on the beauties that court it on all sides; Spain would afford many a pleasant and romantic tour. Wild boars, and deer, and a few wolves, are found in these forests. Birds of all kinds, hawks, kites, vultures, storks, cranes, and bustards, are exceedingly numerous in most parts of the country. Game, especially rabbits, is so abundant in these mountains, that many people live by shooting; and though the number of dogs and ferrets probably exceeds that of houses in every village, I heard many complaints of annual depredations on the crops.

We had traversed some miles of dreary rocky ground, without a tree, and hardly any verdure to soften its aspect, when from a deep valley, formed by two barren mountains, we discovered Olbera, on the top of a third, higher than the rest, and more rugged and steep than any we had hitherto passed Both the approach and view of the town were so perfectly in character with what we knew of the inhabitants, that the idea of spending a week on that spot became gloomy and uncomfortable at that moment.

The rustic and almost savage manners of the *noblesse* of Olbera are unparalleled in Andalusia. Both gentlemen and peasants claim a wild independence, a liberty of misrule for their town, the existence of which betrays the real weakness which never fails to attend despotism. An Andalusian proverb desires you to " Kill your man and fly to Olbera"—*Mata al hombre y vete a Olbera.* A remarkable instance of the impunity with which murder is committed in that town occurred two years before our visit. The *alguacil mayor*, a law-officer of the first rank, was shot dead by an unknown hand, when retiring to his house from an evening *tertulia.* He had offended the chief of a party—for they have here their Capulets and Montagues, though I could never discover a Juliet —who was known to have formerly dispatched another man in a similar way; and no doubt existed in the town, that Lobillo had either killed the alguacil, or paid the assassin. The expectation, however, of his acquittal was as general as the belief of his guilt. To the usual dilatoriness of the judicial forms of the country, to the corruption of the scriveners or notaries who, in taking down, most artfully alter the written evidence upon which the judges ground their decision, was added the terror of Lobillo's name and party, whose vengeance was dreaded by the witnesses. We now found him at the hight of his power; and he was one of the persons examined in evidence of the noble birth and family honours of

the candidate in whose behalf my friend had received the commission of his college. Lobillo is a man between fifty and sixty, with a countenance on which every evil passion is marked in indelible characters. He was, in earlier life, renowned for his forwardness in the savage rioting which to this day forms the chief amusement of the youth of this town. The fact is, that the constant use of spirits keeps many of them in a state of habitual intoxication. One cannot cross the threshold of a house at Olbera without being presented with a glass of brandy, which it would be an affront to refuse. The exploits performed at their drinking-bouts constitute the traditional chronicle of the town, and are recounted with great glee by young and old. The idea of mirth is associated by the *fashionables* of Olbera with a rudeness that often degenerates into downright barbarity. The sports of the field are generally terminated by a supper at one of the *cortijos*, or farm-houses of the gentry, where the *gracioso* or *wit* of the company, is expected to promote some practical joke when mischief is rife among the guests. The word *culebra*, for instance, is the signal for putting out the lights, and laying about with the first thing that comes to hand, as if trying to kill the *snake*, which is the pretended cause of the alarm. The stomachs of the party are, on other occasions, tried with a raw hare or kid, of which no one dares refuse to eat his share: and it is by no means uncommon to pro-

pose the alternative of losing a tooth, or paying a fine.

The relations of the young man whose pedigree was to be examined by my friend, made it a point to entertain us, by rotation, every night with a dance. At these parties there was no music but a guitar, and some male and female voices. Two or four couples stood up for *seguidillas*, a national dance, not unlike the *fandango*, which was, not long since, modified into the *bolero*, by a dancing-master of that name, a native of the province of Murcia, from which it was originally called *Seguidillas Murcianas.* The dancers, rattling their castanets, move at the sound of a single voice, which sings couplets of four verses, with a burthen of three, accompanied by musical chords that, combining the six strings of the guitar into harmony, are incessantly struck with the nails of the right hand. The singers relieve each other, every one using different words to the same tune. The subject of these popular compositions, of which a copious, though not very elegant collection is preserved in the memory of the lower classes, is love; and they are generally appropriate to the sex of the singers.

The illumination of the room consisted of a *candil*—a rude lamp of cast-iron, hung up by a hook on an upright piece of wood fixed on a three-footed stool, the whole of plain deal. Some of the ladies wore their *mantillas* crossed upon the chin so

as to conceal their features. A woman in this garb is called *tapada*; and the practice of that disguise, which was very common under the Austrian dynasty, is still preserved by a few females in some of our country-towns. I have seen them at Osuna and El Arahal, covered from head to foot with a black woollen veil falling on both sides of the face, and crossed so closely before it that nothing could be perceived but the gleaming of the right eye placed just behind the aperture. Our old dramatic writers found in the *tapadas* an inexhaustible resource for their plots. As the laws of honour protected a veiled lady from the intrusions of curiosity, jealousy was thus perpetually mocked by the very objects that were the main source of its alarms.

My introduction, at the first evening-party, to one of the ladies of Olbera, will give you an idea of the etiquette of that town. A young gentleman, the acknowledged *gracioso* of the upper ranks, a character which in those parts must unite that of *first bully* to support it; had from the day of our arrival taken us under his patronage, and engaged to do for us the honours of the place. His only faults were, drinking like a fish, and being as quarrelsome as a bull-dog; *au reste*, he was a kind-hearted soul, and would serve a friend the whole length of the broad-sword, which, according to the good old fashion, he constantly carried under the left arm, concealed by the large foldings of his cloak. At the dances, he was master of the ce-

remonies, and, as such, he introduced us to the company. We had not yet seated ourselves, when Don Juan de la Rosa—such was our patron's name—surprised me with the question, which of the present ladies I preferred to sit by. Thinking it was a jest, I made a suitable answer; but I soon found he was serious. As it was not for me to innovate, or break through the laudable customs of Olbera, no other cause remained for hesitation but the difficulty of the choice. Difficult it was indeed; not, however from the balanced influence of contending beauty, but the formidable host of either coy or grinning faces, which nearly filled one side of the room. To take my post by one of the rustic nymphs, and thus engage to keep up a regular flirtation for the evening, was more, I confess, than my courage allowed me. Reversing, therefore, the maxim which attributes increased horrors to things unknown, I begged to be introduced to a *tapada* who sat in a corner, provided a young man of the town, who was at that moment speaking with her, had not a paramount claim to the place. The word was scarcely spoken, when my friend, Don Juan, advanced with a bold step, and, addressing his townsman with the liberty of an established *gracioso*, declared it was not fit for a *clown* to take that place, instead of the *stranger*. The young man, who happened to be a near relation of the lady, gave up his chair very good-humouredly, and I was glad to find that the airi-

ness and superior elegance of shape, which led me to the choice, had directed me to a gentlewoman. My veiled talking partner was highly amused—I will not say flattered—with what she chose to call my blunder, and, pretending to be old and ugly, brought into full play all my Spanish gallantry. The evening was passed less heavily than I dreaded; and during our stay at Olbera we gave a decided preference to the lady of whom I had, thus strangely, declared myself the *cortejo pro tempore*. She was a native of Malaga, whom her husband, an officer on half-pay, had induced to reside in his native town, which she most cordially detested. Perhaps you wish to know the reason of her disguise at the dance. Moved by a similar curiosity, I ventured to make the inquiry, when I learned that, for want of time to dress, she had availed herself of the custom of the country, which makes the *mantilla* a species of *dishabille* fit for an evening party.

In the intervals of the dance we were sometimes treated with dramatic scenes, of which the dialogue is composed on the spot by the actors. This amusement is not uncommon in country-towns. It is known by the name of *juegos*—a word literally answering to *plays*. The actors are in the habit of performing together, and consequently do not find it difficult to go through their parts without much hesitation. Men in women's clothes act the female characters. The truth is, that far from being sur-

prised at the backwardness of the ladies to join actively in the amusement, the wit and humour of the *juegos* is such, that one only wonders how any modest woman can be present at the performance.

One night the dance was interrupted by the hoarse voice of our worthy friend Don Juan, who happened to be in the kitchen on a visit to a favourite jar of brandy. The ladies, though possessed of strong nerves, shewed evident symptoms of alarm; and we all hurried out of the room, anxious to ascertain the cause of the threatening tones we had heard. Upon our coming to the hall, we found the doughty hero standing at a window with a cocked gun in his hands, sending forth a volley of oaths, and protesting he would shoot the first man who approached his door. The assault, however, which he had thus gallantly repulsed, being now over, he soon became cool enough to inform us of the circumstances. Two or three individuals of the adverse party, who were taking their nightly rounds under the windows of their mistresses, hearing the revel at Rosa's house, were tempted to interrupt it by just setting fire to the door of the entrance-hall. The house might, in a short time, have been in flames, but for the unquenchable thirst of the owner, which so seasonably drew him from the back to the front of the building.

We were once retiring home at break of day,

when Don Juan, who never quitted us, insisted upon our being introduced at that moment to one of two brothers of the name of Ribera, who had, the evening before, arrived from his farm. Remonstrance was in vain: Don Juan crossed the street, and "the wicket opening with a latch," in primitive simplicity, we beheld one of the most renowned *braggadocios* of Olbera lying in bed, with a gun by his side. Ribera, so unceremoniously disturbed, could not help greeting the visitors in rather rough language; but he was soon appeased, on perceiving that we were strangers. He sat up in his bed, and handed to me a tumbler of brandy, just filled from the ever-present green jar, that stood within his reach upon a deal table. The life I was leading had given me a severe cough, and the muzzle of Ribera's gun close to my head would scarcely have alarmed me more than the brim-full rummer with which I was threatened. A terrible fit of coughing, however, came to my assistance; and Don Juan interposing in my favour, I was allowed to lay down the glass.

The facetiousness of the two Riberas is greatly admired in their town. These loving brothers had, on a certain occasion, gone to bed at their *cortijo* (farm), forgetting to put out the *candil*, or lamp, hung up at the opposite end of the hall. The first who had retired urged that it was incumbent on him who sat up latest, to have left every thing in proper order; but the offender was too lazy to quit

his bed, and a long contest ensued. After much, and probably not very temperate disputing, a bright thought seemed to have crossed the younger brother. And so it was indeed ; for stopping short in the argument, he grasped the gun, which, as usual, stood by his bed-side, took a sure aim, and put an end both to the dispute and its subject, by shooting down the *candil.* The humour of this *potent conclusion* was universally applauded at Olbera. I have been assured that the same extinguisher is still, occasionally, resorted to by the brothers; and a gun heard in the night, infallibly reminds the inhabitants, of the Riberas' lamp.*

* See Note G.

LETTER VI.

Seville, —— 1801.

My residence in this town, after visiting Olbera, was short and unpleasant. The yellow-fever, which had some months before appeared at Cadiz, began to show itself in our large suburb of Triana, on the other side of the Guadalquivir. As no measures were taken to prevent communication with Cadiz, it is supposed that the infection was brought by some of the numerous seafaring people that inhabit the vicinity of the river. The progress of the malady was slow at first, and confined to one side of the street where it began. Meetings of all the physicians were convened by the chief magistrates, who, though extremely arbitrary in matters of daily occurrence, are, in Spain, very timid and dilatory on any extraordinary emergency. Unconscious of the impending danger, the people flocked to these meetings to amuse themselves at the expense of our doctors, who are notoriously quarrelsome and abusive when pitted against each other. A few of the most enlightened among them ventured to

declare that the fever was infectious; but their voice was drowned in the clamour of a large majority who wished to indulge the stupid confidence of the inhabitants. The disease in the mean time crossed the river; and following the direction of the street where it originally appeared at Triana—now quite overrun by the infection—began its ravages within the ancient walls of our town. It was already high time to take alarm, and symptoms of it were shewn by the chief authorities. Their measures, however, cannot fail to strike you as perfectly original. No separation of the infected from the healthy part of the town: no arrangement for confining and relieving the sick poor. The governor who, by such means, had succeeded in stopping the progress of the fever would have been called to account for the severity of his measures, and his success against the infection turned into a demonstration that it never existed. Anxious, therefore, to avoid every questionable step in circumstances of such magnitude, the civil authorities wisely resolved to make an application to the archbishop and chapter, for the solemn prayers called *Rogativas*, which are used in times of public affliction. This request being granted without delay, the *Rogativa* was performed at the cathedral for nine consecutive days, after sunset.

The gloom of that magnificent temple, scarcely broken by the light of six candles on the high altar, and the glimmering of the lamps in the aisles,

combined with the deep and plaintive tones of forty singers chanting the penitential psalms, impressed the throng of supplicants with the strongest feelings, which superstition can graft upon fear and distress.

When the people observed the infection making a rapid progress in many parts of the town, notwithstanding the due performance of the usual prayers, they began to cast about for a more effectual method of obtaining supernatural assistance. It was early suggested by many of the elderly inhabitants, that a fragment of the true Cross, or *Lignum Crucis*, one of the most valuable relics possessed by the cathedral of Seville, should be exhibited from the lofty tower called *Giralda*; for they still remembered, when, at the view of that miraculous splinter, myriads of locusts which threatened destruction to the neighbouring fields, rose like a thick cloud, and conveyed themselves away, probably to some infidel country. The *Lignum Crucis*, it was firmly believed, would, in like manner, purify the atmosphere, and put an end to the infection. Others, however, without any disparagement to the holy relic, had turned their eyes to a large wooden crucifix, formerly in great repute, and now shamefully neglected, on one of the minor altars of the Austin Friars, without the gates of the town. The effectual aid given by that crucifix in the plague of 1649 was upon record. This wonderful image had, it seems, stopped the infec-

tion, just when one half of the population of Seville had been swept away; thus evidently saving the other half from the same fate. On this ground, and by a most natural analogy, the hope was very general, that a timely exhibition of the crucifix through the streets, would give instant relief to the town.*

Both these schemes were so sound and rational, that the chief authorities, unwilling to shew an undue partiality to either, wisely determined to combine them into one great *lustration*. A day was, accordingly, fixed for a solemn procession to conduct the crucifix from the convent to the cathedral, and to ascend the tower for the purpose of *blessing* the four cardinal winds with the *Lignum Crucis*. On that day, the chapter of the cathedral, attended by the civil governor, the judges, the inquisitors, and the town corporation, repaired to the convent of Saint Augustin, and, having placed the crucifix upon a moveable stage covered with a magnificent canopy, walked before it with lighted candles in their hands, while the singers, in a mournful strain, repeated the names of the saints contained in the Catholic litany, innumerable voices joining, after every invocation in the accustomed response — *Ora pro nobis*. Arrived at the cathedral, the image was exposed to public adoration within the presbytery, or space reserved

* See Note H.

for the ministering clergy, near the high altar. After this the dean, attended by the chapter, the inferior ministers of the church, and the singers, moved in solemn procession towards the entrance of the tower, and, in the same order ascended the five-and-twenty inclined planes, which afford a broad and commodious access to the open belfry of that magnificent structure. The worship paid to any fragment of the true Cross is next in degree to that which is due to the consecrated host. On the view of the priest in his robes at one of the four central arches of the majestic steeple, the multitude, who had crowded to the neighbourhood of the cathedral from all parts of the city, fell upon their knees, their eyes streaming with tears: tears, indeed, which that unusual sight would have drawn from the weak and superstitious on any other occasion, but which, in the present affliction, the stoutest heart could hardly repress. An accidental circumstance heightened the impressiveness of the scene. The day, one of the hottest of an Andalusian summer, had been overcast with electric clouds. The priest had scarcely begun to make the sign of the cross with the golden vase which contains the *Lignum Crucis*, when one of the tremendous thunder-storms, so awful in southern climates, burst upon the trembling multitude. A few considered this phenomenon as a proof that the public prayers were heard, and looked upon the lightning as the instrument which was to dis-

perse the cause of the infection. But the greatest number read in the frowns of the sky the unappeased anger of Heaven, which doomed them to drain the bitter cup that was already at their lips. Alas! they were not deceived. That doom had been sealed when Providence allowed ignorance and superstition to fix their dwelling among us; and the evils which my countrymen feared from a preternatural interposition of the avenging powers above, were ready to arise as the natural consequences of the means they themselves had employed to avert them. The immense concourse from all parts of the town had, probably, condensed into a focus the scattered seeds of infection. The heat, the fatigue, the anxiety of a whole day spent in this striking, though absurd, religious ceremony, had the most visible and fatal effect on the public health. Eight and forty hours after the procession, the complaint had left but few houses unvisited. The deaths increased in a ten-fold proportion, and at the end of two or three weeks the daily number was from two to three hundred.

Providence spared me and my best friend by the most unforeseen combination of circumstances. Though suffering under an obstinate ague, *Leandro* —so he is called at our private club—had determined not to quit his college, at the head of which he was placed for that year. His family, on the other hand, had for some time resided at Alcalá de Guadaíra, a village beautifully situated within twelve

miles of Seville. Alarmed at the state of the town, and unwilling to leave my friend to perish, either by the infection, or the neglect to which the general consternation exposed an invalid, I prevailed upon him to join his family, and attended him thither. This was but a few days before the religious ceremony which I have described from the narrative of eye-witnesses. It was my intention to have returned to Seville; but the danger was now so imminent, that it would have been madness to encounter it without necessity. Thus a visit which I meant for a week, was inevitably prolonged to six months.

For you, however, who love detail in the description of this hitherto little known country, my time was not spent in vain. Yet I must begin by a fact which will be of more interest to my old friend, Doctor —— than yourself.

Alcalá de Guadaíra is a town containing a population of two thousand inhabitants, and standing on a high hilly spot to the north-east of Seville. The greatest part of the bread consumed in this city comes daily from Alcalá, where the abundant and placid stream of the Guadaíra, facilitates the construction of water-mills. Many of the inhabitants being bakers, and having no market but Seville, were under the necessity of repairing thither during the infection. It is not with us as in England, where every tradesman practically knows the advantages of the division of labour, and is at liberty,

to consult his own convenience in the sale of his articles. The bakers, the butchers, the gardeners, and the farmers, are here obliged to sell in separate markets, where they generally spend the whole day waiting for customers. Owing to this regulation of the police, about sixty men, and double that number of mules, leave Alcalá every day with the dawn, and stand till the evening in two rows, inclosed with iron railings, at the *Plaza del Pan*. The constant communication with the people from all parts of the town, and so long an exposure to the atmosphere of an infected place, might have been supposed powerful enough to communicate the disease. We, certainly, were in daily apprehension of its appearance at Alcalá. So little, however, can we calculate the effects of unknown causes, that of the people that thus braved the contagion, only one, who passed the night in Seville, caught the disease and died. All the others, no less than the rest of the village, continued to enjoy the usual degree of health, which, probably owing to its airy situation, is excellent at all times.

The daily accounts we received from our city, independent of the danger to which we believed ourselves exposed, were such as would cast a gloom over the most selfish and unfeeling. Superstition, however, as if the prospect had not been sufficiently dark and dismal, was busy among us, increasing the terrors which weighed down the

minds of the people. Two brothers, both clergymen, wealthy, proud, conceited of the jargon they mistook for learning, and ambitious of power under the cloak of zeal, had, upon the first appearance of the fever, retreated to Alcalà, where they kept a country-house. Two more odious specimens of the pampered, thorough-bred, full-grown Spanish bigot, never appeared in the ranks of the clergy. The eldest, a dignitary of the church, was a selfish devotee, whose decided taste for good living, and mortal aversion to discomfort, had made him calculate with great nicety how, by an economy of pleasure in this world, he might secure a reasonable share of it in the next. But whatever degree of self-denial was necessary to keep him from gross misconduct, he amply repaid himself in the enjoyment of control over the consciences and conduct of others.

From the comparative poverty of the parish priests, and the shade into which they are thrown by the upper clergy, the power of the first is so limited, that the most bigoted and violent among them can give but little trouble to the laity. The true priest of old times is only to be found among those ecclesiastics, who to a dignified office join that degree of fanaticism which makes men conceive themselves commissioned by Heaven to weed the world of evil, and tear up by the roots whatever offends their privileged and infallible eyes. Thus it was, for instance, that the holy personage

at Alcalá claimed and exercised a right to exclude from church such females as, by a showy dress, were apt to disturb the abstracted, yet susceptible minds of the clergy. The lady of a judge was, within my recollection, turned by this proud bigot out of the cathedral of Seville, in the presence of a multitude assembled for the ceremonies of the Passion-week. The husband, whose displeasure would have brought ruin on a more humble individual, was obliged to devour this insult in silence. It should be observed, by the way, that as the walking-dress of the Spanish females absolutely precludes immodesty, the conduct of this religious madman admits no excuse or palliation. Yet this is so far from being a singular instance, that, what sumptuary laws would never be able to accomplish, the rude and insolent zeal of a few priests has fully obtained in every part of Spain. Our females, especially those of the better classes, never venture to church in any dress but such as habit has made familiar to the eyes of the zealots.

Whatever be the feelings that produce it, there is, in Spain, a sort of standing crusade against the fair sex, which our priests, except such as have been secretly gained over to the enemy, carry on incessantly, though not with the same vigour, at all times. The main subject of contention is a right claimed by the clergy to regulate the dress of the ladies, and prevent the growth of such arts

of charming as might endanger the peace of the church. Upon the appearance of a new fashion, the "drum ecclesiastic" never fails to sound the war-note. Innumerable are the sermons I heard in my younger days against silk shoes—for the Spanish females have the extravagance to use them out of doors—the wearing of which, especially embroidered with silk or gold, was declared by the soundest divines to be a *mortal sin.* Patience, however, and that watchful perseverance with which Nature has armed the weaker sex against the tyranny of the stronger, have gradually obtained a toleration for silk shoes, while taste has extenuated the sin by banishing the embroidery. Yet the Demon of Millinery had lately set up another stumbling-block, by slily suggesting to the ladies that their petticoats were monstrous long, and concealed those fairy feet and ankles which are the pride of Andalusia. The petticoats shrunk first by barleycorns; half an inch was then pared off by some bolder sempstress, till at length the ground, the former place of safety for consecrated eyes, was found thick set with snares. In vain have the most powerful preachers thundered against this abomination; nor did it avail that some of our bishops, deeming the occasion worthy of their interference, grasped the long-neglected pen to enter a most solemn protest against the *profaneness* of the female dress. But the case seemed hopeless. A point gained upon petticoats

was sure to be lost on top-knots; and when the pious were triumphing on the final subjection of projecting stays, a pin threw them into utter confusion by altering its position on the orthodox neck-kerchief.

Often had some great calamity been foretold from the pulpit as the punishment of the incorrigible perverseness of our females; and, on the first appearance of the fever, there was but little doubt among the chosen few as to its real cause. Many a stitch was undone at Seville, and many a flounce torn off, by the same pretty hand that, but a few days before, had distributed its foldings with a conscious feeling of its future airiness and light flutterings. The pin, which, in Spain, forces the cambric kerchief to do, both morning and evening, the transient morning duty of your ruffs and spencers—that mysterious pin which vibrates daily at the toilette under the contending influence of vanity and delicacy—the pin, in short, which, on our females, acts as the infallible barometer of devotion, had risen to the highest point of *dryness*, without, alas! checking the progress of the disease.

Our two divines, fearful of being swept away with the guilty, were, at this time, perfectly outrageous in their zeal to bring the bakers' wives at Alcalá to a due sense of the evil influence of their glaring, bushy top-knots and short petticoats. Having, therefore, with little ceremony to the vicar, taken possession of the parish church, they began

a course of preaching for nine days, known by the name of *Novena*, a definite number which, with many other superstitions, has been applied to religious rites among the Catholics since the times of Roman paganism.

Most of the Spanish villages possess some miraculous image—generally of the Virgin Mary—which is the *palladium* of the inhabitants. These tutelar deities are of a very rude and ancient workmanship, as it seems to have been the case with their heathen prototypes. The "Great Diana" of the *Alcalaians* is a small, ugly, wooden figure, nearly black with age, and the smoke of the lamp which burns incessantly before it, dressed up in a tunic and mantle of silver or gold tissue, and bearing a silver crown. It is distinguished from the innumerable host of wooden virgins by the title of *Virgen del Aguila*—"the Virgin of the Eagle," and is worshipped on a high romantic spot, where stood a high fortress of the Moors, of which large ruins are still visible. A church was erected, probably soon after the conquest of Andalusia, on the area of the citadel. A spring-well of the most delicious water is seen within the precincts of the temple, to which the natives resort for relief in all sorts of distempers. The extreme purity of both air and water, on that elevated spot, may indeed greatly contribute to the recovery of invalids, for which the Virgin gets all the credit.

The *Novena*, which was to avert the infection

from the village, would have been inefficient without the presence of the *Eagle* patroness, to whom it was dedicated. The image was, accordingly, brought down to the parish church in a solemn procession. The eldest *Missionary*—for such priests as preach, not for a display of eloquence, but the conversion of sinners, assume that title among us—having a shrill, disagreeable voice, and being apt, when he addressed the people, to work himself into a feverish excitement approaching to madness, generally devolved that duty on his brother, while he devoted himself to the confessional. The brother is, indeed, cast in the true mould of a popular preacher, such as can make a powerful impression on the lower classes of Spain. His person is strong, his countenance almost handsome, his voice more loud than pleasing. He has, in fact, all the characteristics of an Andalusian *Majo* : jet black passionate eyes, a shining bluish beard darkening his cheeks from within an inch of his long eye-lashes, and a swaggering gait which, in the expressive idiom of the country, gives such as move with it, the name of *Perdonavidas*—Life sparers, as if other people owed their lives to the mercy, or contempt of these heroes. The effects of his preaching were just what people expect on similar occasions. A Missionary feels baffled and disappointed when he is not interrupted by groans, and some part of the female audience will not go into hysterics. If he has a grain of spirit about

him, such a perverse indifference nettles him into a furious passion, and he turns the insensibility of his hearers into a visible proof of their reprobate state. Thus it often happens, that, the people measuring their spiritual danger by the original dulness or incomprehensibility of the sermon, the final triumph of the missionary is in exact proportion to his absurdity. To make these wild discourses more impressive, as well as to suit the convenience of the labouring classes, they are commonly delivered after sunset. Our orator, it is true, omitted the exhibition of a soul in hell-flames, which a few years ago was regularly made from the pulpit in a transparent picture; but he worked up the feelings of the audience by contrivances less disgusting and shocking to common sense. Among others he fixed a day for collecting all the children of the town under seven years of age, before the image of the Virgin. The parents, as well as all others who had attained the age of moral responsibility, were declared to be unworthy of addressing themselves in supplication, and therefore excluded from the centre of the church, which was reserved for the throng of innocent suppliants.

When the first period of nine days had been spent in this mockery of common sense and religion, the fertile minds of our missionaries were not at a loss to find a second course of the same pious mummery, and so on till the infection had ceased at Seville. The preservation of the village

from the fever which, more or less, had existed for three or four months in the neighbouring towns, you will easily believe, was attributed by the preachers to their own exertions. The only good effect, however, which I observed, in consequence of their sermons, was the increased attendance of the male part of the population at the *Rosario de Madrugada*—the Dawn Rosary—one of the few useful and pleasing customs which religion has introduced in Spain.

It is an established practice in our country towns to awake the labouring population before the break of day, that they may be early in readiness to begin their work, especially in the corn-fields, which are often at the distance of six or eight miles from the labourers' dwellings. Nothing but religion, however, could give a permanency to this practice. Consequently a *rosary*, or procession, to sing praises to the Virgin Mary before the dawn, has been established among us from time immemorial. A man with a good voice, active, sober, and fond of early rising, is either paid, or volunteers his services, to perambulate the streets an hour before day-break, knocking at the doors of such as wish to attend the procession, and inviting all to quit their beds and join in the worship of the Mother of God. This invitation is made in short couplets, set to a very simple melody, and accompanied by the pretty and varied tinkling of a hand-bell, beating time to the tune. The effect of the

bell and voice, especially after a long winter-night, has always been very pleasing to me. Nor is the fuller chorus of the subsequent procession less so. The chant, by being somewhat monotonous, harmonizes with the stillness of the hour; and without chasing away the soft slumbers of the morning, relieves the mind from the ideas of solitude and silence, and whispers life and activity returning with the approaching day.

The fever having stopped its ravages about the end of autumn, and nearly disappeared a few weeks before Christmas, my friend and myself prepared to return home. I shall never forget our melancholy arrival in this town on the last evening of December. Besides the still existing danger of infection to those who had been absent, there was a visible change in the aspect of the town, no less than in the looks and manner of the inhabitants, which could not but strike the most thoughtless on the first approach to that scene of recent misery and woe. An unusual stillness reigned in every street; and the few pale faces which moved in them, worked in the mind a vivid representation of the late distress. The heart seemed to recoil from the meeting of old acquaintances; and the signs of mourning were every where ready to check the first risings of joy at the approach of friends that had been spared.

The Sunday after our arrival, we went, according to custom, to the public walk on the banks of the

river. But the thousands who made it their resort before the late calamity, had now absolutely deserted it. At the end of the walk was the burying-ground, which, during the great mortality, had been appointed for that quarter of the city. The prevalent custom of burying in vaults within the churches kept the town unprovided with an appropriate place for interment out of the walls; and a portion of waste land, or common, now contained the remains of ten thousand inhabitants, who in their holiday rambles had, not long before, been sporting unconsciously over their graves. As we approached the large mounds, which, with the lofty cross erected on the turf, were yet the only marks which distinguished the consecrated from the common ground, we saw one of the *Rosarios*, or processions in honour of the Virgin, slowly advancing along the avenue of the public walk. Many who formerly frequented that place for recreation, had, under the impression of grief and superstitious terror, renounced every species of amusement, and marshalling themselves in two files, preceded by a cross, and closed by the picture of the Virgin on a standard, repaired every Sunday to the principal place of burial, where they said prayers for the dead. Four or five of these processions, consisting either of males or females, passed towards the cemetery as we were returning. The melancholy tone in which they incessantly sang the Ave Maria and the Lord's Prayer, as they

glided along a former scene of life and animation; and the studied plainness of the dresses, contrasted with the gay apparel which the same persons used to display on that very spot, left us no wish to prolong our walk. Among the ladies whose penitent dress was most striking, we observed many who, not satisfied with mere plainness of attire, had, probably under a private vow, clothed themselves in a stuff peculiar to some of the religious orders. The grey mixture used by the Franciscans was most prevalent. Such vows are indeed very common in cases of danger from illness; but the number and class of the females whom we found submitting to this species of penance, shewed the extent and pressure of the past affliction.

So transient, however, are the impressions of superstitious fear when unsupported by the presence of its object, that a few months have sufficed nearly to obliterate the signs of the past terror. The term of the vows having expired with most, our females have recovered their wonted spirits, and put aside the dull weeds of their holy patrons. Many, it is probable, have obtained from their confessors a commutation of the rash engagement, by means of a few pence paid towards the expenses of any war that may arise between his Catholic Majesty and Turks or infidels—a Crusade, for which government collects a vast yearly sum, in exchange for various ghostly privileges and indulgences, which the King buys from the Pope at a

much cheaper rate than he retails them to his loving subjects.

One loss alone will, I fear, be permanent, or of long duration to the gay part of this town. The theatrical representations, which, on the first appearance of the epidemic fever, were stopped, more by the clamour of the preachers than the apprehensions of the inhabitants; will not be resumed for years. The opinion formerly entertained by a comparatively small number, that the opening of the theatre at Seville had never failed to draw the vengeance of heaven sometimes on its chief supporters, sometimes on the whole town; has been wonderfully spread under the influence of the last visitation: and government itself, arbitrary and despotic as it is among us, would have to pause before any attempt to involve this most religious city in the unpardonable guilt of allowing a company of comedians within its walls.

LETTER VII.

Seville, —— 1803.

I HAVE connected few subjects with more feelings of disgust and pain, than that of the Religious Orders in this country. The evil of this institution, as it relates to the male sex, is so unmixed, and unredeemed by any advantage, and its abuse, as applied to females, so common and cruel, that I recoil involuntarily from the train of thought which I feel rising in my mind. But the time approaches, or my wishes overstep my judgment, when this and such gross blemishes of society will be finally extirpated from the face of the civilized world. The struggle must be long and desperate; and neither the present nor the ensuing generation are likely to see the end. Let me, however, flatter myself with the idea, that by exposing the mischievous effects of the existing system, I am contributing—no matter how little—towards its final destruction. Such a notion alone can give me courage to proceed.

Gibbon has delineated, with his usual accuracy,

the origin and progress of monastic life;* and to his elegant pages I must refer you for information on the historical part of my subject. But his account does not come down to the establishment of the Mendicant Orders of Friars. The distinction, however, between these and the Monks is not very important. The Monks, as the original name implies, retired from the world to live in perfect solitude. As these fanatics increased, many associations were formed, whose members, professing the same rule of religious life, were distinguished by the appropriate name of *Cænobites*.† When, at length, the frantic spirit which drove thousands to live like wild beasts in the deserts, had relaxed, and the original *Eremites* were gradually gathered into the more social establishment of convents, the original distinction was forgotten, and the primitive name of Monks became prevalent. Still holding up their claims to be considered *Anachorites*, even when they had become possessed of lands and princely incomes; their monasteries were founded in the neighbourhood, but never within the precincts of towns: and though the service of their churches is splendid, it is not intended for the benefit of the people, and the Monks are seldom seen either in the pulpit or the confessional.

The Friars date their origin from the beginning of the thirteenth century, and were instituted for

* Chapter xxxvii. † Persons who live in common.

the express purpose of acting as auxiliaries to the clergy. Saint Dominic, the most odious, and Saint Francis, the most frantic of modern saints, enlisted their holy troops without any limitation of number; for, by quartering them on the productive population of Christendom, the founders took no concern for the daily supply of their numerous followers.

The Dominicans, however, having succeeded in the utter destruction of the Albigenses, and subsequently monopolized, for more than three centuries, the office of inquisitors, enriched themselves with the spoils of their victims, and are in the enjoyment of considerable wealth. The Franciscans continue to thrive upon alms; and, relying on the promise made to Saint Francis in a vision, that his followers should never feel want, point to the abundant supplies which flow daily into their convents as a permanent miracle which attests the celestial origin of their order. With the historical proofs of St. Francis's financial vision I confess myself perfectly unacquainted. But when I consider that the general or chief of these holy beggars, derives from the collections daily made by his friars, a personal income of twenty thousand a year, I cannot withhold my assent to its genuineness; for who, except a supernatural being, could possess such a thorough knowledge of the absurdity of mankind?

It would be tedious to enter into a description of the numerous orders comprehended under the two

classes of Monks and Friars. The distinguishing characters of the first are wealth, ease, and indulgence—those of the last, vulgarity, filth, and vice. I shall only add that, among the Monks, the Benedictines are at the top of the scale for learning and decency of manners, while the Hieronimites deservedly occupy the bottom. To the Friars I am forced to apply the Spanish proverb—"There is little to choose in a mangy flock." The Franciscans, however, both from their multitude and their low habits of mendicity, may be held as the proper representatives of all that is most objectionable in the religious orders.

The inveterate superstition which still supports these institutions among us has lost, of late, its power to draw recruits to the cloister, from the middle and higher classes. Few monks, and scarcely a friar, can be found, who by taking the cowl, has not escaped a life of menial toil. Boys of this rank of life are received as novices at the age of fifteen, and admitted, after a year's probation, to the perpetual vows of *obedience*, *poverty*, and *celibacy*. Engagements so discordant with the first laws of human nature could hardly stand the test of time, even if they arose from the deepest feelings of enthusiasm. But this affection of the mind is seldom found in our convents. The year of noviciate is spent in learning the cant and gestures of the vilest hypocrisy, as well as in strengthening, by the example of the professed young friars, the ori-

ginal gross manners and vicious habits of the probations.* The result of such a system is but too visible. It is a common jest among the friars themselves, that in the act of taking the vows, when the superior of the convent draws the cowl over the head of the novice, he uses the words *Tolle verecundiam*—" Put off shame." And indeed, were the friars half so true to their profession as they are to this supposed injunction, the Church of Rome would really teem with saints. Shameless in begging, they share the scanty meal of the labourer, and extort a portion of every product of the earth from the farmer. Shameless in conduct, they spread vice and demoralization among the lower classes, secure in the respect which is felt for their profession, that they may engage in a course of profligacy without any risk of exposure. When an instance of gross misconduct obtrudes itself upon the eyes of the public, every pious person thinks it his duty to hush up the report, and cast a veil on the transaction. Even the sword of justice is glanced aside from these consecrated criminals. I shall not trouble you with more than two cases, out of a multitude, which prove the power of this popular feeling.

The most lucrative employment for friars, in this town, is preaching. I have not the means to ascertain the number of sermons delivered at Seville

* See Note I.

in the course of the year; but there is good reason to suppose that the average cannot be less than twelve a-day. One preacher, a clergyman, I know, who scarcely passes one day without mounting the pulpit, and reckons on three sermons every four-and-twenty hours, during the last half of Lent.

Of these indefatigable preachers, the greatest favourite is a young Franciscan friar, called Padre R——z, whose merit consists in a soft clear-toned voice, a tender and affectionate manner, and an incredible fluency of language. Being, by his profession, under a vow of absolute poverty, and the Franciscan rule carrying this vow so far as not to allow the members of the order to touch money, it was generally understood that the produce of these apostolical labours was faithfully deposited to be used in common by the whole religious community. An incident, however, which lately came to light, has given us reason to suspect that we are not quite in the secret of the internal management of these societies of saintly paupers, and that individual industry is rewarded among them with a considerable share of profits. A young female cousin of the zealous preacher in question, was living quite alone in a retired part of this town, where her relative paid her, it should seem, not unfrequent visits. Few, however, except her obscure neighbours, suspected her connexion with the friar, or had the least notion of her existence. An old woman attended her in the day-time, and retired in the even-

ing, leaving her mistress alone in the house. One morning the street was alarmed by the old servant, who, having gained admittance, as usual, by means of a private key, found the young woman dead in her bed, the room and other parts of the house being stained with blood. It was clear, indeed, upon a slight inspection of the body, that no violence had taken place; yet the powerful interest excited at the moment, and before measures had been taken to hush the whole matter, spread the circumstances of the case all over the town, and brought the fact to light, that the house itself belonged to the friar, having been purchased by an agent with the money arising from his sermons. The hungry vultures of the law would have reaped an abundant harvest upon any lay individual who had been involved in such a train of suspicious circumstances. But, probably, a proper *douceur* out of the sermon fees increased their pious tenderness for the friar; while he was so emboldened by the disposition of the people to shut their eyes on every circumstance which might sully the fair name of a son of Saint Francis, that, a few days after the event, he preached a sermon, denouncing the curse of Heaven on the impious individuals who could harbour a belief derogatory to his sacred character.

Crimes of the blackest description were left unpunished during the last reign, from a fixed and avowed determination of the King* not to inflict

* Charles III.

the punishment of death upon a priest. Townsend has mentioned the murder of a young lady committed by a friar at San Lucar de Barrameda; and I would not repeat the painful narrative, were it not that my acquaintance with some of her relatives, as well as with the spot on which she fell, enables me to give a more accurate statement.

A young lady, of a very respectable family in the above-mentioned town, had for her confessor a friar of the Reformed or *Unshod* Carmelites. I have often visited the house where she lived, in front of the convent. Thither her mother took her every day to mass, and frequently to confession. The priest, a man of middle age, had conceived a passion for his young penitent, which, not venturing to disclose, he madly fed by visiting the unsuspecting girl with all the frequency which the spiritual relation in which he stood towards her, and the friendship of her parents, allowed him. The young woman now about nineteen, had an offer of a suitable match, which she accepted with the approbation of her parents. The day being fixed for the marriage, the bride, according to custom, went, attended by her mother, early in the morning to church, to confess and receive the sacrament. After giving her absolution, the confessor, stung with the madness of jealousy, was observed whetting a knife in the kitchen. The unfortunate girl had, in the mean time, received the host, and was now leaving the church, when the villain, meeting her in the porch, and pretending to speak a few

words in her ear—a liberty to which his office entitled him—stabbed her to the heart in the presence of her mother. The assassin did not endeavour to escape. He was committed to prison; and after the usual delays of the Spanish law, was condemned to death. The King, however, commuted this sentence into a confinement for life in a fortress at Puerto Rico. The only anxiety ever showed by the murderer was respecting the success of his crime. He made frequent enquiries to ascertain the death of the young woman; and the assurance that no man could possess the object of his passion, seemed to make him happy during the remainder of a long life.

Instances of enthusiasm are so rare, even in the most austere orders, that there is strong ground to suspect its seeds are destroyed by a pervading corruption of morals. The Observant Franciscans, the most numerous community in this town, have not been able to set up a living saint after the death, which happened four or five years since, of the last in the series of servants to the order, who, for time immemorial, have been a source of honour and profit to that convent. Besides the lay-brothers—a kind of upper servants under religious vows, but excluded from the dignity of holy orders—the friars admit some peasants, under the name of Donados, (*Donati*, in the Latin of the middle ages,) who, like their predecessors of servile condition, give themselves up, as their name expresses it, to the

service of the convent. As these people are now-a-days at liberty to leave their voluntary servitude, none are admitted but such as by the weakness of their understanding, and the natural timidity arising from a degree of imbecility, are expected to continue for life in a state of religious bondage. They wear the habit of the order, and are employed in the most menial offices, unless, being able to act, or rather to bear the character of extraordinary sanctity, they are sent about town to collect alms for their employers. These idiot saints are seen daily with a vacillating step, and look of the deepest humility, bearing about an image of the child Jesus, to which a basket for alms is appended, and offering, not their hand, which is the privilege of priests, but the end of their right sleeve, to be kissed by the pious. To what influence these miserable beings are sometimes raised, may be learned from a few particulars of the life of Hermanito Sebastian (Little Brother Sebastian) the last but one of the Franciscan collectors in this town.

During the last year of Philip V. Brother Sebastian was presented to the *Infantes*, the king's sons, that he might confer a blessing upon them. The courtiers present, observing that he took most notice of the king's third son, Don Carlos, observed to him that his respects were chiefly due to the eldest, who was to be king. "Nay, nay, (it is reported he answered, pointing to his favourite) this shall be king too." Some time after this interview, Don

Carlos was, by the arrangements which put an end to the Succession War, made Sovereign Prince of Parma. Conquest subsequently raised him to the throne of Naples; and, lastly, the failure of direct heirs to his brother Ferdinand VI. put him in possession of the crown of Spain. His first and unexpected promotion to the sovereignty of Parma had strongly impressed Don Carlos with the idea of Sebastian's knowledge of futurity. But when, after the death of the prophet, he found himself on the throne of Spain, he thought himself bound in honour and duty to obtain from the Pope the *Beatification*, or Apotheosis, of *Little Sebastian.* The Church of Rome, however, knowing the advantages of strict adherence to rules and forms, especially when a king stands forward to pay the large fees incident to such trials, proceeded at a pace, compared to which your Court of Chancery would seem to move with the velocity of a meteor. But when the day arrived for the exhibition, before the Holy Congregation of Cardinals, of all papers whatever which might exist in the hand-writing of the candidate for saintship, and it was found necessary to lay before their Eminences an original letter, which the King carried about his person as an amulet; good Carlos found himself in a most perplexing dilemma. Distracted between duty to his ghostly friend, and his fears of some personal misfortune during the absence of the letter, he exerted the whole influence of his crown through the Spanish ambassador at Rome, that the trial might

proceed upon the inspection of an authentic copy. The Pope, however, was inexorable, and nothing could be done without the autograph. The king's ministers at home, on the other hand, finding him restless, and scarcely able to enjoy the daily amusement of the chase, succeeded, at length, in bringing about a plan for the exhibition of the letter, which, though attended with an inevitable degree of anxiety and pain to his majesty, was, nevertheless, the most likely to spare his feelings. The most active and trusty of the Spanish messengers was chosen to convey the invaluable epistle to Rome, and his speed was secured by the promise of a large reward. Orders were then sent to the ambassador to have the Holy Congregation assembled on the morning when the messenger had engaged to arrive at the Vatican. By this skilful and deep-laid plan of operations, the letter was not detained more than half an hour at Rome; and another courier returned it with equal speed to Spain. From the moment when the King tore himself from the sacred paper, till it was restored to his hands, he did not venture once out of the palace. I have given these particulars on the authority of a man no less known in Spain for the high station he has filled, than for his public virtues and talents. He has been minister of state to the present King, Charles IV., and is intimately acquainted with the secret history of the preceding reign.*

* Jovellanos; see Appendix.

Great remnants of self-tormenting fanaticism are still found among the Carthusians. Of this order we have two monasteries in Andalusia, one on the banks of the Guadalquivir, within two miles of our gates, and another at Xeréz, or Sherry, as that town was formerly called in England, a name which its wines still bear. These monasteries are rich in land and endowments, and consequently afford the monks every comfort which is consistent with their rule. But all the wealth in the universe could not give those wretched slaves of superstition a single moment of enjoyment. The unhappy man who binds himself with the Carthusian vows, may consider the precincts of the cell allotted him as his tomb. These monks spend daily eight or nine hours in the chapel, without any music to relieve the monotony of the service. At midnight they are roused from their beds, whither they retire at sunset, to chaunt matins till four in the morning. Two hours rest are allowed them between that service and morning prayers. Mass follows, with a short interruption, and great part of the afternoon is allotted to vespers. No communication is permitted between the monks, except two days in the week, when they assemble during an hour for conversation. Confined to their cells when not attending church-service, even their food is left them in a wheel-box, such as is used in the nunneries,*

* See Letter V. page 141.

from which they take it when hungry, and eat it in perfect solitude. A few books and a small garden, in which they cultivate a profusion of flowers, are the only resources of these unfortunate beings. To these privations they add an absolute abstinence from flesh, which they vow not to taste even at the risk of their lives.

I have on different occasions spent a day with some friends at the *Hospederia*, or Stranger's Lodge, at the Carthusians of Seville, where it is the duty of the steward, the only monk who is allowed to mix in society, to entertain any male visitors who, with a proper introduction, repair to the monastery. The steward I knew before my visit to England, had been a merchant. After several voyages to Spanish America, he had retired from the world, which, it was evident in some unguarded moments, he had known and loved too well to have entirely forgotten. His frequent visits to the town, ostensibly upon business, were not entirely free from suspicion among the idle and inquisitive; and I have some reason to believe that these rumours were found too well grounded by his superiors. He was deprived of the stewardship, and disappeared for ever from the haunts of men.

The austerity of the Carthusian rule of life would cast but a transient gloom on the mind of an enlightened observer, if he could be sure that the misery he beheld was voluntary; that hope kept a crown of glory before the eyes of every wretched prisoner,

and that no unwilling victim of a temporary illusion, was pining for light and liberty, under the tombstone sealed over him by religious tyranny. But neither the view of the monks, fixed as statues in the stalls of their gloomy church, nor those that are seen in the darkest recesses of the cloisters, prostrate on the marble pavement, where, wrapt up in their large white mantles, they spend many an hour in meditation; nor the bent, gliding figures which wander among the earthy mounds under the orange-trees of the cemetery—that least melancholy spot within the wall of the monastery,—nothing did ever so harrow my feelings in that mansion of sorrow, as the accidental meeting of a repining prisoner. This was a young monk, who, to my great surprise, addressed me as I was looking at the pictures in one of the cloisters of the Carthusians near Seville, and very politely offered to shew me his cell. He was perfectly unknown to me, and I have every reason to believe that I was equally so to him. Having admired his collection of flowers, we entered into a literary conversation, and he asked me whether I was fond of French literature. Upon my shewing some acquaintance with the writers of that nation, and expressing a mixed feeling of surprise and interest at hearing a Carthusian venturing upon that topic, the poor young man was so thrown off his guard, that, leading me to a bookcase, he put into my hands a volume of Voltaire's *Pièces Fugitives*, which he spoke of with rapture.

I believe I saw a volume of Rousseau's works in the collection ; yet I suspect that this unfortunate man's *select library* consisted of amatory rather than philosophical works. The monk's name is unknown to me, though I learned from him the place of his birth ; and many years have elapsed since this strange meeting, which from its insulation amidst the events and impressions of my life, I compare to an interview with an inhabitant of the invisible world. But I shall never forget the thrilling horror I felt, when the abyss of misery into which that wretched being was plunged, opened suddenly upon my mind. I was young, and had, till that moment, mistaken the nature of enthusiasm. Fed as I saw it in a Carthusian convent, I firmly believed it could not be extinguished but with life. This ocular evidence against my former belief was so painful, that I hastened my departure, leaving the devoted victim to his solitude, there to wait the odious sound of the bell which was to disturb his sleep, if the subsequent horror of having committed himself with a stranger, allowed him that night to close his eyes.

Though the number of Hermits is not considerable in Spain, we are not without some establishments on the plan of the *Lauras* described by Gibbon.* The principal of these solitudes is Monserrat in Catalonia, an account of which you will find in

* Chapter xxxvii.

most books of travels. My own observation on this point does not, however, extend beyond the hermitages of Cordoba, which, I believe, rank next to the above-mentioned.

The branch of Sierra Morena, which to the north of Cordoba separates Andalusia from La Mancha, rises abruptly within six miles of that city. On the first ascent of the hills the country becomes exceedingly beautiful. The small rivulets which freshen the valleys, aided by the powerful influence of a southern atmosphere, transform these spots, during April and May, into the most splendid gardens. Roses and lilies, of the largest cultivated kinds, have sown themselves in the greatest profusion upon every space left vacant by the mountain-herbs and shrubs, which form wild and romantic hedges to these native flower-plots. But as you approach the mountain-tops to the right and left, the rock begins to appear, and the scanty soil, scorched and pulverized by the sun, becomes unfit for vegetation. Here stands a barren hill of difficult approach on all sides, and precipitous towards the plain, its rounded head inclosed within a rude stone parapet, breast high, a small church rising in the centre, and about twenty brick tenements irregularly scattered about it. The dimensions of the huts allow just sufficient room for a few boards raised about a foot from the ground, which, covered with a mat, serve for a bed: a trivet to sit upon, a diminutive deal table supporting a crucifix,

a human skull, and one or two books of devotion. The door is so low that it cannot be passed without stooping; and the whole habitation is ingeniously contrived to exclude every comfort. As visiting and talking together is forbidden to the hermits, and the cells are at some distance from one another, a small bell is hung over the door of each, to call for assistance in case of sickness or danger. The hermits meet at chapel every morning to hear mass and receive the sacrament from the hands of a secular priest; for none of them are admitted to orders. After chapel, they retire to their cells, where they pass their time in reading, meditation, plaiting mats, making little crosses of Spanish broom, which people carry about them as a preservative from erysipelas, and manufacturing instruments of penance, such as scourges and a sort of wire bracelets bristled inside with points, called *Cilicios*, which are worn near the skin by the *ultra-pious* among the Catholics. Food, consisting of pulse and herbs, is distributed once a day to the hermits, leaving them to use it when they please. These devotees are usually peasants, who, seized with religious terrors, are driven to this strange method of escaping eternal misery, in the next world. But the hardships of their new profession are generally less severe than those to which they were subject by their lot in life; and they find ample amends for their loss of liberty in the certainty of food and clothing without la-

bour, no less than in the secret pride of superior sanctity, and the consequent respect of the people.

Thus far these hermitages excite more disgust than compassion. But when, distracted by superstition, men of a higher order and more delicate feelings, fly to these solitudes as to a hiding-place from mental terrors; the consequences are often truly melancholy. Among the hermits of Cordoba, I found a gentleman who, three years before, had given up his commission in the army, where he was a colonel of artillery, and, what is perhaps more painful to a Spaniard, his cross of one of the ancient orders of knighthood. He joined our party, and showed more pleasure in conversation than is consistent with that high fever of enthusiasm, without which his present state of life must have been worse than death itself. We stood upon the brow of the rock, having at our feet the extensive plains of Lower Andalusia, watered by the Guadalquivir, the ancient city of Cordoba with its magnificent cathedral in front, and the mountains of Jaén, sweeping majestically to the left. The view was to me, then a very young man, truly grand and imposing; and I could not help congratulating the hermit on the enjoyment of a scene which so powerfully affected the mind, and wrapt it up in contemplation. "Alas! (he answered with an air of dejection) I have seen it every day these three years!" As hermits are not bound to their profession by irrevocable vows, perhaps this unfor-

tunate being has, after a long and painful struggle, returned to the habitations of men, to hide his face in an obscure corner, bearing the reproach of apostacy and backsliding from the bigoted, and the sneer of ridicule from the thoughtless; his prospects blasted for ever in this world, and darkened by fear and remorse, in the next. Woe to the incautious who publicly engage their services to religion, under the impression that they shall be allowed to withdraw them upon a change of views, or an abatement of fervour. The very few establishments of this kind, where solemn vows do not banish the hopes of liberty for ever, are full of captives, who would fain burst the invisible chains that bind them; but cannot. The church and her leaders are extremely jealous of such defections: and as few or none dare raise the veil of the sanctuary, redress is nearly impossible for such as trust themselves within it. But of this more in my next.

LETTER VIII.

Seville, —— 1805.

When the last census was made, in 1787, the number of Spanish females confined to the cloister, for life, amounted to thirty-two thousand. That in a country where wealth is small and ill distributed, and industry languishes under innumerable restraints, there should be a great number of portionless gentlewomen unable to find a suitable match, and consequently glad of a dignified asylum, where they might secure peace and competence, if not happiness; is so perfectly natural, that the founders and supporters of any institution intended to fulfil those objects, would deserve to be reckoned among the friends of humanity. But the cruel and wicked church law, which, aided by external force, binds the nuns with perpetual vows, makes the convents for females the *Bastilles* of superstition, where many a victim lingers through a long life of despair or insanity.

Though I do not mean to enter into a point of theological controversy, I find it impossible to

dwell for a moment on this subject without expressing my utter abhorrence and detestation of the cold indifference with which our Church looks on the glaring evil consequences of some of its laws, when, according to her own doctrines, they might be either repealed or amended, without relinquishing any of her chaims. The authority of the Roman Pontiff, in all matters of church government, is not questioned among Catholics. Yet, from a proud affectation of infallibility, even upon such points as the most violent partisans of that absurd pretention have never ventured to place within its reach, the church of Rome has been so sparing of the power to reform her laws, that it might be suspected she wished to abandon it by prescription. Always ready to *bind*, the heirs of Saint Peter have shewn themselves extremely averse to the more humane office of *loosing on earth*, except when it served the purposes of gain or ambition. The time, I believe, will never come when the church of Rome will agree to make concessions on what are called *matters of faith*. But I cannot discover the least shadow of reason or interest for the obstinacy which preserves unaltered the barbarous laws relating to the religious vows of females; unless it be that vile animal jealousy, which persons, deprived of the pleasures of love, are apt to mistake for zeal in the cause of chastity; such zeal as your Queen Elizabeth felt for the purity of her maids.

The nunneries in this town amount to twenty-nine. Of these, some are under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Friars, whose rule of religious life they profess; and some under that of the Episcopal See. The last, generally follow the monastic rules of Saint Benedict, Saint Bernard, or Saint Jerom; and it is remarkable, that the same superiority which is observable in the secular above the regular clergy, is found in the nuns under the episcopal jurisdiction. Some of these inhabit large convents, whose courts and gardens allow the inhabitants ample space for exercise and amusement. Instead of narrow cells, the nuns live in a comfortable suite of apartments, often at the head of a small family of younger nuns whom they have educated, or of pupils, not under religious vows, whom their parents place there for instruction. The life, in fact, of these communities, is rather collegiate than monastic; and were it not for the tyrannical law which deprives the professed nuns of their liberty, such establishments would be far from objectionable. The dress of these nuns is still that which the *Dueñas*, or elderly matrons, wore when the convents were founded; with the addition of a large mantle, black, white, or blue, according to the custom of the order, which they use at the choir. From a head-dress not unlike that which, if I may venture upon such matters, I believe you call a *mob-cap;* hangs the black veil. A rosary, or chaplet of

black beads with a cross at the end, is seen hanging over the neck and shoulders, or loosely coiled on a leather strap, which tightens the tunic or gown to the waist. A slip of cloth of the breadth of the shoulders, called the *scapulary*, hangs down to the feet both before and behind, probably with a view to conceal every outline of the female shape.

The mildness of these monastic rules being unsatisfactory to the fiery spirit of bigotry, many convents have been founded under the title of *Reformed*, where, without the least regard to the sex of the votaries, young and delicate females are subjected to a life of privation and hardship, as the only infallible method of obtaining the favour of Heaven. Their dress is a tunic of sackcloth, tied round the waist with a knotted rope. The rule allows them no linen either for clothing or bedding. Woollen of the coarsest kind frets their bodies, day and night, even during the burning summers of the South of Spain. A mantle of the same sackcloth is the only addition which the nuns make to their dress in winter, while their feet, shod with open sandals, and without either socks or stockings, are exposed to the sharp winter blasts, and the deadening chill of the brick-floors. A band of coarse linen, two inches in breadth, is worn by the Capuchin nuns, bound tight six or eight times round the head, in remembrance, it is said, of the *crown of thorns*; and such is the barbarous spirit of the rule, that it does not allow this band to be

taken off, even under an access of fever. A young woman who takes the veil in any of the reformed convents, renounces the sight of her nearest relations. The utmost indulgence, as to communication with parents and brothers, extends only to a short conversation once a month, in the presence of one of the elder nuns, behind a thick curtain spread on the inner side of the iron grating, which completely intercepts the view. The religious vows, however, among the Capuchin nuns, put a final end to all communication between parents and children.

To those unacquainted with the character of our species of Christianity, it will be difficult to conceive what motive can influence the mind of a young creature of sixteen thus to sacrifice herself upon the altars of these Molochs, whom we call Saints and Patriarchs. To me these horrid effects of superstition appear so natural, that I only wonder when I see so many of our religious young females still out of the convent. Remorse and mental horrors goad some young men into the strictest monasteries, while more amiable, though equally mistaken views, lead our females to a similar course of life. We are taught to believe self-inflicted pain to be acceptable to the Deity, both as an atonement for crime, and a token of thankfulness. The female character, among us, is a compound of the most ardent feelings—vehement to delirium, generous to devotedness. What won-

der then if, early impressed with the loveliness and sufferings of an incarnate Deity, an exquisitely tender mind grow restless and dissatisfied with a world, as yet known only through the pictures of morose fanatics, and pant after the most effectual means of giving her celestial lover an unquestionable proof of gratitude? The first nascent wish of taking the veil is eagerly watched and seized by a confessor, who, to a violent jealousy of earthly bridegrooms, joins a confident sense of merit in adding one virgin more to the ten thousand of the spiritual *Harem*. Pious parents tremble at the thought of standing between God and their daughter, and often with a bleeding heart lead her to the foot of the altar.

There is an extreme eagerness in the Catholic professors of celibacy, both male and female, to decoy young persons into the toils from which they themselves cannot escape. With this view they have disguised the awful ceremony which cuts off an innocent girl from the sweetest hopes of nature, with the pomp and gaiety, which mankind have unanimously bestowed on the triumph of legitimate love. The whole process which condemns a female "to wither on the virgin thorn," and "live a barren sister all her life," is studiously made to represent a wedding. The unconscious victim, generally in her fifteenth year, finds herself, for some time previous to her taking the veil, the queen—nay, the idol of the whole community which has

obtained her preference. She is constantly addressed by the name of bride, and sees nothing but gay preparations for the expected day of her spiritual nuptials. Attired in a splendid dress, and decked with all the jewels of her family and friends, she takes public leave of her acquaintance; visits, on her way to the convent, several other nunneries, to be seen and admired by the recluse inhabitants; and even the crowd which collects in her progress, follows her with tears and blessings. As she approaches the church of her monastery, the dignifiep ecclesiastic who is to perform the ceremony, meets the intended novice at the door, and leads her to the altar, amid the sounds of bells and musical instruments. The monastic weeds are blessed by the priest in her presence; and having embraced her parents and nearest relations, she is led by the lady who acts as bride's-maid to the small door next to the double grating, which separates the nuns' choir from the body of the church. A curtain is drawn while the abbess cuts off the hair of the novice, and strips her of her worldly ornaments. On the removal of the curtain she appears in the monastic garb, surrounded by the nuns bearing lighted tapers, her face covered with the white veil of probationship, fixed on the head by a wreath of flowers. After the Te Deum, or some other hymn of thanksgiving, the friends of the family adjourn to the *Locutory*, or visiting-room, where a collation of ices and sweetmeats is served in the presence of

the mock bride, who, with the principal nuns, attends behind the grating which separates the visitors from the inmates of the convent. In the more austere nunneries the parting visit is omitted, and the sight of the novice in the white veil, immediately after having her hair cut off, is the last which, for a whole year, is granted to the parents. They again see her on the day when she binds herself with the irrevocable vows, never to behold her more, unless they should live to see her again crowned with flowers, when she is laid in the grave.

Instances of novices quitting the convent during the year of probation are extremely rare. The ceremony of taking the veil is too solemn, and bears too much the character of a public engagement, to allow full liberty of choice during the subsequent noviciate. The timid mind of a girl shrinks from the idea of appearing again in the world, under the tacit reproach of fickleness and relaxed devotion. The nuns, besides, do not forget their arts during the nominal trial of the victim, and she lives a whole year the object of their caresses. Nuns, in fact, who, after profession, would have given their lives for a day of free breathing out of their prison, it has been my misfortune to know; but I cannot recollect more than one instance of a novice quitting the convent; and that was a woman of obscure birth, on whom public opinion had no influence.

That many nuns, especially in the more liberal convents, live happy, I have every reason to believe; but, on the other hand, I possess indubitable evidence of the exquisite misery which is the lot of some unfortunate females, under similar circumstances. I shall mention only one case, in actual existence, with which I am circumstantially acquainted.

A lively and interesting girl of fifteen, poor, though connected with some of the first gentry in this town, having received her education under an aunt who was at the head of a wealthy, and not austere, Franciscan convent, came out, as the phrase is, *to see the world*, previous to her taking the veil. I often met the intended novice at the house of one of her relations, where I visited daily. She had scarcely been a fortnight out of the cloister, when that world she had learned to abhor in description, was so visibly and rapidly winning her affections, that at the end of three months she could hardly disguise her aversion to the veil. The day, however, was now fast approaching which had been fixed for the ceremony, without her feeling sufficient resolution to decline it. Her father, a good but weak man, she knew too well, could not protect her from the ill-treatment of an unfeeling mother, whose vanity was concerned in thus disposing of a daughter for whom she had no hopes of finding a suitable match. The kindness of her aunt, the good nun to whom the distressed

girl was indebted for the happiness of her childhood, formed, besides, too strong a contrast with the unkindness of the unnatural mother, not to give her wavering mind a strong though painful bias towards the cloister. To this were added all the arts of pious seduction so common among the religious of both sexes. The preparations for the approaching solemnity were, in the mean time, industriously carried on with the greatest publicity. Verses were circulated, in which her confessor sang the triumph of Divine Love over the wily suggestions of the *impious*. The *wedding-dress* was shewn to every acquaintance, and due notice of the appointed day was given to friends and relatives. But the fears and aversion of the devoted victim grew in proportion as she saw herself more and more involved in the toils she had wanted courage to burst when she first felt them.

It was in company with my friend Leandro, with whose private history you are well acquainted,* that I often met the unfortunate Maria Francisca. His efforts to dissuade her from the rash step she was going to take, and the warm language in which he spoke to her father on that subject, had made her look upon him as a warm and sincere friend. The unhappy girl on the eve of the day when she was to take the veil, repaired to church, and sent him a message, without mentioning her name, that

* See Letter III.

a female penitent requested his attendance at the confessional. With painful surprise he found the future novice at his feet, in a state bordering on distraction. When a flood of tears had allowed her utterance, she told him that, for want of another friend in the whole world to whom she could disclose her feelings, she came to him, not, however, for the purpose of confession, but because she trusted he would listen with pity to her sorrows. With a warmth and eloquence above her years, she protested that the distant terrors of eternal punishment, which, she feared, might be the consequence of her determination, could not deter her from the step by which she was going to escape the incessant persecution of her mother. In vain did my friend volunteer his assistance to extricate her from the appalling difficulties which surrounded her: in vain did he offer to wait upon the archbishop, and implore his interference: no offers, no persuasions could move her. She parted as if ready to be conveyed to the scaffold, and the next day took the veil.

The real kindness of her aunt, and the treacherous smiles of the other nuns, supported the pining novice through the year of probation. The scene I beheld when she was bound with the perpetual vows of monastic life, is one which I cannot recollect without an actual sense of suffocation. A solemn mass, performed with all the splendour which that ceremony admits, preceded the awful oaths of

the novice. At the conclusion of the service, she approached the superior of the order. A pen, gaily ornamented with artificial flowers, was put into her trembling hand, to sign the engagement for life, on which she was about to enter. Then, standing before the iron grate of the choir, she began to chaunt, in a weak and fainting voice, the act of consecration of herself to God; but, having uttered a few words, she fainted into the arms of the surrounding nuns. This was attributed to mere fatigue and emotion. No sooner had the means employed restored to the victim the powers of speech, than, with a vehemence which those who knew not her circumstances attributed to a fresh impulse of holy zeal, and in which the few that were in the painful secret saw nothing but the madness of despair; she hurried over the remaining sentences, and sealed her doom for ever.

The real feelings of the new votaress were, however, too much suspected by her more bigoted or more resigned fellow-prisoners; and time and despair making her less cautious, she was soon looked upon as one likely to bring disgrace on the whole order, by divulging the secret that it is possible for a nun to feel impatient under her vows. The storm of conventual persecution, (the fiercest and most pitiless of all that breed in the human heart), had been lowering over the unhappy young woman during the short time which her aunt, the prioress, survived. But when death had left her friendless,

and exposed to the tormenting ingenuity of a crowd of female zealots, whom she could not escape for an instant; unable to endure her misery, she resolutely attempted to drown herself. The attempt, however, was ineffectual. And now the merciless character of Catholic superstition appeared in its full glare. The mother, without impeaching whose character no judicial steps could be taken to prove the invalidity of the profession, was dead; and some relations and friends of the poor prisoner were moved by her sufferings to apply to the church for relief. A suit was instituted for this purpose before the ecclesiastical court, and the clearest evidence adduced of the indirect compulsion which had been used in the case. But the whole order of Saint Francis, considering their honour at stake, rose against their rebellious subject, and the judges sanctioned her vows as voluntary and valid. She lives still in a state approaching to madness, and death alone can break her chains.*

Such an instance of misery is, I hope, one of those extreme cases which seldom take place, and more seldom transpire. The common source of suffering among the Catholic recluses proceeds from a certain degree of religious melancholy, which, combined with such complaints as originate in perpetual confinement, affect more or less the greater number.

* She died in 1821.

The mental disease to which I allude is commonly known by the name of *Escrúpulos*, and might be called *religious anxiety*. It is the natural state of a mind perpetually dwelling on hopes connected with an invisible world, and anxiously practising means to avoid an unhappy lot in it, which keep the apprehended danger for ever present to the imagination. Consecration for life at the altar promises, it is true, increased happiness in the world to come; but the numerous and difficult duties attached to the religious profession, multiply the hazards of eternal misery by the chances of failure in their performance; and while the plain Christian's offences against the moral law are often considered as mere frailties, those of the professed votary seldom escape the aggravation of sacrilege. The odious diligence of the Catholic moralists has raked together an endless catalogue of sins, by *thought, word, and deed*, to every one of which the punishment of eternal flames has been assigned. This list, alike horrible and disgusting, haunts the imagination of the unfortunate devotee, till, reduced to a state of perpetual anxiety, she can neither think, speak, nor act, without discovering in every vital motion a sin which invalidates all her past sacrifices, and dooms her painful efforts after Christian perfection, to end in everlasting misery. Absolution, which adds boldness to the resolute and profligate, becomes a fresh source of disquietude to a timid and sickly mind. Doubts in-

numerable disturb the unhappy sufferer, not, however, as to the power of the priest in granting pardon, but respecting her own fulfilment of the conditions, without which to receive absolution is *sacrilege*. These agonizing fears, cherished and fed by the small circle of objects to which a nun is confined, are generally incurable, and usually terminate in an untimely death, or insanity.

There are, however, constitutions and tempers to which the atmosphere of a nunnery seems natural and congenial. Women of uncommon cleverness and judgment, whose strength of mind preserves them in a state of rational happiness are sometimes found in the cloisters. But the true, the genuine nun—such, I mean, as, unincumbered by a barbarous rule, and blessed with that Liliputian activity of mind which can convert a parlour or a kitchen into an universe—presents a most curious modification of that amusing character, *the old maid.* Like their virgin sisters all over the world, they too have, more or less, a flirting period, of which the confessor is always the happy and exclusive object. The heart and soul of almost every nun not passed fifty, are centred in the priest that directs her conscience. The convent messengers are seen about the town with lots of spiritual *billets-doux*, in search of a soothing line from the ghostly fathers. The nuns not only address them by that endearing name, but will not endure from them the common form of speech in the third person :—they must be *tutoyé*, as children are by

their parents. Jealousy is a frequent symptom of this nameless attachment; and though it is impossible for every nun to have exclusive possession of her confessor, few will allow the presence of a rival within their own convent.

I do not intend, however, to cast an imputation of levity on the class of Spanish females which I am describing. Instances of gross misconduct are extremely rare among the nuns. Indeed, the physical barriers which protect their virtue are fully adequate to guard them against the consequences of a most unbounded intimacy with their confessors. Neither would I suggest the idea that nothing but obstacles of this kind keeps them, in all cases, within the bounds of modesty. My only object is to expose the absurdity and unfeelingness of a system which, while it surrounds the young recluses with strong walls, massive gates, and spiked windows, grants them the most intimate communication with a man—often a young man—that can be carried on in words and writing. The struggle between the heart thus barbarously tried, and the unnatural duties of the religious state, though sometimes a mystery to the modest sufferer, is plainly visible in most of the young captives.

About the age of fifty, (for spiritual flirtation seldom exhausts itself before that age,) the genuine nun has settled every feeling and affection upon that shifting centre of the universe, which, like some circles in astronomy, changes with every

step of the individual—I mean *self*. It has been observed that no European language possesses a true equivalent for your English word *comfort;* and, considering the state of this country, Spanish would have little chance of producing a similar substantive, were it not for some of our nuns, who, as they make a constant practical study of the subject, may, at length, enrich our dictionary with a name for what they know so well without it. Their comforts, however, poor souls! are still of an inferior kind, and arise chiefly from the indulgence of that temper, which, in the language of your *ladies' maids*, makes their mistresses *very particular;* and which, by a strange application of the word, confers among us the name of *impertinente.* The squeamishness, fastidiousness, and morbid sensibility of nuns, make that name a proverbial reproach to every sort of affected delicacy. As great and wealthy nunneries possess considerable influence, and none can obtain the patronage of the Holy Sisters (*Mothers*, they are called by the Spaniards,) without accommodating themselves to the tone and manners of the society; every person, male or female, connected with it, acquires a peculiar mincing air, which cannot be mistaken by an experienced observer. But in none does it appear more ludicrously than in the old-fashioned *nun-doctors.* Their patience in listening to long, minute, and often-told reports of cases; the mock authority with which they enforce their prescriptions, and the peculiar wit they employ to raise the

spirits of their patients, would, in a more free country, furnish comedy with a most amusing character. Some years ago a very stupid practitioner bethought himself of taking orders, thus to unite the spiritual and bodily leech, for the convenience of nuns. The Pope granted him a dispensation of the ecclesiastical law, which forbids priests to practise physic ; and he found himself unrivalled in powers, among the faculty. The scheme succeeded so well that our doctor sent home for a lad, his nephew, whom he has brought up in this twofold trade, which, for want of direct heirs, of which priests in this country cannot boast, is likely to be perpetuated in the collateral branches of that family. With regard to their curative system, as it applies to the souls, I am a very incompenent judge: the body, I know—at least the half-spiritualized bodies of the nuns—they treat exclusively with syrups. This is a fact of which I have a melancholy proof in a near relation, a most amiable young woman, who was allowed to drop into an early grave, while her growing disease was opposed with nothing but syrup of violets ! I must add, however, that the wary doctor, not forgetting the ghostly concerns of his patient, never omitted to add a certain dose of *Agnus Castus* to every ounce of the syrup ; a practice to which, he once told a friend of mine, both he and his uncle most religiously adhered when attending young nuns, with the benevolent purpose of making their religious duties more easy.

LETTER IX.

Seville, —— 1806.

As, in order to help my memory, I have been for some time collecting notes under different heads, relative to the customs, both public and private, which are most remarkable in the annual circle of *Sevillian* life, I find myself possessed of a number of detached scraps, which, though affording abundant matter for more than one of my usual dispatches, are much too stubborn to bend themselves into any but their original shape. After casting about in my mind for some picturesque or dramatic plan of arrangement, I had, most cowardly, I confess, and like a mere novice in the art of authorship, determined to suppress the detached contents of my common-place book, when it occurred to me that, as they were no less likely to gratify your curiosity in their present state than in a more elaborate form, a simple transcript of my notes would not stand amiss in the collection of my letters. I shall, therefore, present you with the following sample of my *Fasti Hispalenses*, or Se-

villian Almanack, without, however, binding myself to furnish it with the three hundred and sixty-five articles which that name seems to threaten. Or, should you still find the title too ambitious and high-sounding for the mere gossip and prattle of this series of scraps, I beg you will call it (for I have not the heart to send out my productions not only shapeless, but nameless)

MEMORANDUMS OF SOME ANDALUSIAN CUSTOMS AND FESTIVALS.

JANUARY 20TH. SAINT SEBASTIAN'S DAY.

Carnival has been ushered in, according to an ancient custom which authorises so early a commencement of the gaieties that precede Lent. Little, however, remains of that spirit of mirth which contrived such ample amends for the demure behaviour required during the annual grand fast. To judge from what I have seen and heard in my boyhood, the generation who lived at Seville before me, were, in their love of noisy merriment, but one step above children; and contrived to pass a considerable portion of their time in a round of amusements, more remarkable for jollity than for either show or refinement; yet unmixed with any grossness or indecorum. I shall give a specimen in a family of middle rank, whose circumstances were not the most favourable to cheerfulness.

The joy and delight of my childhood was centered in the house of four spinsters of the good old times, who, during a period of between fifty and sixty years, passed "in single blessedness," and with claims to respectability, as ample as their means of supporting it were scanty; had waged the most resolute and successful war against melancholy, and were now the seasoned veterans of mirth. Poverty being no source of degradation among us, these ladies had a pretty numerous circle of friends, who, with their young families, frequented their house—one of the old, large, and substantial buildings which, for a trifling rent, may be had in this town, and which care and neatness have kept furnished for more than a century, without the addition or substitution of a single article. In a lofty drawing-room, hung round with tapestry, the faded remnants of ancient family pride, the good old ladies were ready, every evening after sunset, to welcome their friends, especially the young of both sexes, to whom they showed the most good-natured kindness. Their scanty revenue did not allow them to treat the company with the usual refreshments, except on particular days—an expense which they met by a well-planned system of starvation, carried on throughout the year, with the utmost good humour. An ancient guitar, as large as a moderate violoncello, stood up in a corner of the room, ready at a moment's notice, to stir up the spirits of the young people into a dance

of the Spanish *Seguidillas*, or to accompany the songs which were often *forfeited* in the games that formed the staple merriment at this season.

The games, in truth, which in England are nearly forgotten, even within their last asylums — ladies' schools and nurseries,—were thirty years ago a favourite amusement in this country. That they have, at some period, been common to a great part of Europe, will not be doubted by any one who, like myself, may attach such importance to this subject as to be at the trouble of comparing the different sports of that kind which prevail in France, England, and Spain. I wish, indeed, that antiquarians were a more jovial and volatile race than I have found them in general; and that some one would trace up these amusements to their common source. The French, with that spirit of system and scientific arrangement which even their perfumers, *Marchandes de Modes*, and dancing-masters display, have already, according to a treatise now lying before me, distributed these games into *Jeux d'action* and *Jeux d'esprit*.

In marking their similarity among the three nations I have mentioned, I shall pass over the former; for who can doubt that *romping* (so I will venture, though less elegantly, to express the French *action*) is an innate principle in mankind, impelling the human animal to similar pranks all over the globe, from the first to the third of his climacterics? But to find that, just at the age

when he perceives the necessity of assuming the demureness of maturity, he should, in different places and under a variety of circumstances, fall upon the same contrivances in order to *desipere in loco*, or to find a loop-hole to indulge himself in *playing the fool*, is a phenomenon which I beg leave to recommend to the attention of philosophers.

The *jeux d'esprit*, which I find to be used, with some slight variations, in France, England, and Spain, or, at least, in some two of those countries, are — *The Aviary*, or giving the heart to one bird, committing one's secret to another, and plucking a feather from a third; at the risk of mistaking the objects of the intended raillery or gallantry, disguised under the name of different birds.—In *The Soldier*, the players being questioned by the leader about the clothing they mean to give a decayed veteran, must avoid the words *yes*, *no*, *white*, and *black*. The ingenuity displayed in this game is much of the kind that appears in some of our tales of the seventeenth century, where the author engaged to omit some particular vowel throughout his narrative.—*Exhausting a letter*, each player being obliged to use three words with the initial proposed by the leader. The English game, *I love my love*, is a modification of this: in Spanish it is commonly called *el Jardin*, the Garden. — *La Plaza de Toros*, or the Bull Amphitheatre, in French, *L'Amphigouri*, is a story made up of

words collected from the players, each of whom engages to name objects peculiar to some trade.—*Le mot placé*, a refinement on *Cross purposes*, in Spanish *Los Despropósitos*, is a game in which every player in the ring, having whispered to his neighbour, on the right, the most unusual word he can think of, questions are put in the opposite direction, the answer to which, besides being pertinent, must contain the given word.—*The stool of repentance*, (Gallicè) *La Sellette*, (Hispan.) *La Berlina*, is, as my French author wisely observes, a dangerous game, where the penitent hears his faults from every one in company through the medium of the leader, till he can guess the person who has nettled him most by his remarks.

I will not deny that a taste among grown people for these childish amusements, bespeaks a great want of refinement; but I must own, on the other hand, that there is a charm in the remnants of primitive simplicity, which gave a relish to these scenes of domestic gaiety, not to be found in the more affected manners of the present day. The French, especially in the provinces, are still addicted to these joyous, unsophisticated family meetings. For my part, I lament that the period is nearly gone by, when neither bigotry nor fastidiousness had as yet condemned those cheap and simple means of giving vent to the overflow of spirits, so common in the youth of all countries, but more especially under this our animating sky; and cannot endure with

patience, that fashion should begin to disdain those friendly meetings, where mirth and joy, springing from the young, diffused a fresh glow of life over the old, and Hope and Remembrance seemed to shake hands with Pleasure in the very teeth of Time.

As Carnival approached, the spirit of romping gained fast upon its assiduous votaries, till it ended in a *full possession*, which lasted the three days preceding Ash-Wednesday.

The custom alluded to by Horace of *sticking a tail*,* is still practised by the boys in the streets, to the great annoyance of old ladies, who are generally the objects of this sport. One of the ragged striplings that wander in crowds about Seville, having tagged a piece of paper with a hooked pin, and stolen unperceived behind some slow-paced female, as, wrapt up in her veil, she tells the beads she carries in her left hand; fastens the paper-tail on the back of the black or walking petticoat, called *Saya*. The whole gang of ragamuffins, who, at a convenient distance, have watched the dexterity of their companion, set up a loud cry of *Lárgalo, lárgalo*--Drop it, drop it—which makes every female in the street look to the rear, which, they

* . . . Nihilo ut sapientior, ille
Qui te deridet, caudam trahat, SAT. II. iii.

So he who dared thy madness to deride,
Though you may frankly own yourself a fool,
Behind him trails his mark of ridicule.

FRANCIS.

well know is the fixed point of attack with the merry light-troops. The alarm continues till some friendly hand relieves the victim of sport, who, spinning and nodding like a spent top, tries in vain to catch a glance at the fast-pinned paper, unmindful of the physical law which forbids her head to revolve faster than the great orbit on which the ominous comet flies.

Carnival, properly so called, is limited to Quinquagesima-Sunday, and the two following days, a period which the lower classes pass in drinking and rioting in those streets where the meaner sort of houses abound, and especially in the vicinity of the large courts, or halls, called *Corrales*, surrounded with small rooms or cells, where numbers of the poorest inhabitants live in filth, misery, and debauch. In front of these horrible places are seen crowds of men, women, and children, singing, dancing, drinking, and pursuing each other with handfuls of hair-powder. I have never seen, however, an instance of their taking liberties with any person above their class; yet, such bacchanals produce a feeling of insecurity, which makes the approach of those spots very unpleasant during the Carnival.

At Madrid, where whole quarters of the town, such as *Avapiés* and *Maravillas*, are inhabited exclusively by the rabble, these Saturnalia are performed upon a larger scale. I once ventured with three or four friends, all muffled in our cloaks, to parade the Avapiés during the Carnival. The

streets were crowded with men, who, upon the least provocation, real or imaginary, would have instantly used the knife, and of women equally ready to take no slight share in any quarrel: for these lovely creatures often carry a poniard in a sheath, thrust within the upper part of the left stocking, and held up by the garter. We were, however, upon our best behaviour, and by a look of complacency on their sports, and keeping at the most respectful distance from the women, came away without meeting with the least disposition to insolence or rudeness.

A gentleman who, either out of curiosity or depraved taste, attends the amusements of the vulgar, is generally respected, provided he is a mere spectator, and appears indifferent to the females. The ancient Spanish jealousy is still observable among the lower classes; and while not a sword is drawn in Spain upon a love-quarrel, the knife often decides the claims of more humble lovers. Yet, love is, by no means, the main instigator of murder among us. A constitutional irritability, especially in the southern provinces, leads, without any more assignable reason, to the frequent shedding of blood. A small quanty of wine, nay, the mere blowing of the easterly wind, called *Soldno*, is infallibly attended with deadly quarrels in Andalusia. The average of dangerous or mortal wounds, on every great festival at Seville, is, I believe, about two or three. We have, indeed, a well-endowed hospital,

named *de los Heridos,* which, though open to all persons who meet with dangerous accidents, is from this unhappy disposition of the people, almost confined to the wounded. The large arm-chair where the surgeon in attendance examines the patient just as he is brought in, usually upon a ladder, is known in the whole town by the name of the Bullies' chair—*Silla de los Guapos.* Every thing, in fact, attests both the generality and inveteracy of that horrible propensity among the Spaniards. I have met with an original unpublished privilege granted in 1511, by King Don Manoel of Portugal, to the German merchants established at Lisbon, whereby their servants, to the number of six, are allowed to carry arms both day and night, provided such privileged servants be not Spaniards."* Had this clause been inserted after the Portuguese nation had thrown off the Spanish yoke, I should attribute it to political jealousy; but, considering its date, I must look upon it as proving the inveteracy and notoriety of the barbarous disposition, the mention of which has led me into this digression.

The Carnival amusements still in use among the middling ranks of Andalusia are, swinging, playing all manner of tricks on the unwary, such as breaking egg-shells full of powdered talc on the

* "Os quais servidores naô seiaô Hespanhôes para gozarem de dita libertade.

head, and throwing handfuls of small sugar-plums at the ladies, which they repay with besprinkling the assailants with water from a squirt. This last practical joke, however, begins to be disused, and increased refinement will soon put an end to them all. Dancing and a supper to the frequenters of the daily *Tertulia*, is, on one of the three days of Carnival, a matter of course among the wealthy.

ASH-WEDNESDAY.

The frolics of Carnival are sometimes carried on till the dawn of this day, the first of the long fast of Lent, when a sudden and most unpleasant transition takes place for such as have set no bounds to the noisy mirth of the preceding season. But, as the religious duties of the church begin at midnight, the amusements of Shrove-Tuesday cease, in the more correct families, at twelve, just as your Opera is hurried, on Saturdays, that it may not encroach on the following day.

Midnight is, indeed, a most important period with us. The obligation of fasting begins just when the leading clock of every town strikes twelve; and as no priest can celebrate mass, on any day whatever, if he has taken the smallest portion of meat or drink after the beginning of the civil day, I have often seen clergymen devouring their supper against time, the watch upon the table, and the anxious eye upon the fatal hand, while large mouthfuls,

chasing one another down their almost convulsed throats, appeared to threaten suffocation. Such hurry will seem incredible to your well-fed Englishmen, for whom supper is an empty name. Not so to our worthy divines, who, having had their dinner at one, and a cup of chocolate at six, feel strongly the necessity of a substantial supper before they retire to bed. A priest, therefore, who, by some untoward accident, is overtaken by "the dead waste and middle of the night," with a craving stomach, having to perform mass at a late hour next morning, may well feel alarmed at his impending sufferings. The strictness, in fact, with which the rule of receiving the Sacrament into a fasting stomach is observed, will hardly be believed in a Protestant country. I have known many a profligate priest; yet never but once met with any who ventured to break this sacramental fast. The infraction of this rule would strike horror into every Catholic bosom; and the convicted perpetrator of such a daring sacrilege as dividing the power of digestion between the Host and common food, would find it difficult to escape the last vengeance of the Church. This law extends to the laity whenever they intend to communicate.

I must now acquaint you with the rules of the Roman Catholic fast, which all persons above the age of one-and-twenty, are bound to observe during Lent, Sundays excepted. One meal alone, from which flesh, eggs, milk, and all its preparations,

such as cheese and butter, called *Lacticinia*, are excluded, is allowed on a fast day. It is under this severe form that your English and Irish Catholics are bound to keep their Lent. But we Spaniards are the darlings of our Mother Church of Rome, and enjoy most valuable privileges. The *Bull* of *the Crusade*, in the first place, dispenses with our abstinence from eggs and milk. Besides throwing open the hen-house and dairy, the said Bull unlocks the treasure of laid-up merits, of which the Pope keeps the key, and thus we are refreshed both in body and soul, at the trifling cost of about threepence a-year. Yet we should have been compelled to live for forty days on your Newfoundland fish—not a savoury food in these hot countries—had it not been for a new kind of hostilities which our Government, in concert with the Pope, devised against England, I believe during the siege of Gibraltar. By allowing the Spaniards to eat meat four days in the Lent weeks, it was proposed to diminish the profits which Great Britain derives from the exportation of dried fish. We had accordingly another privilege, under the title of *Flesh-Bull*, at the same moderate price as the former. This additional revenue was found too considerable to be relinquished on the restoration of peace; and the Pope, who has a share in it, soon discovered that the weakness of our constitutions requires more solid nutriment than the dry chips of the Newfoundland fish can afford.

The *Bull of the Crusade* is proclaimed, every year before Lent, by the sound of kettle-drums and trumpets. As no one can enjoy the privileges expressed in these papal rescripts without possessing a printed copy thereof, wherein the name of the owner is inserted; there is a house at Seville with a printing-office, by far the most extensive in Andalusia, where, at the expense of Government, these Bulls are reprinted every year, both for Spain and Spanish America. Now, it has been wisely arranged that, on the day of the yearly publication, copies for the preceding twelvemonth shall become absolutely stale and unprofitable; a measure which produces a most prodigious hurry to obtain new Bulls, in all who wish well to their souls and do not quite overlook the ease and comfort of their stomachs.

The article of *Bulls* hold a conspicuous station in the Spanish budget. The price of the copies being, however, more than double in Spanish America, it is from thence that the chief profit of this spiritual juggle arises. Cargoes of this holy paper are sent over every year by Government to all our transatlantic possessions, and one of the most severe consequences of a war with England, is the difficulty of conveying these ghostly treasures to our brethren of the New World, no less than that of bringing back the worldly, yet necessary, dross, which they give in exchange to the Mother-country. But I fear I am betraying state secrets.

MID-LENT.

We have still the remnants of an ancient custom this day, which shews the impatient feelings with which men sacrifice their comforts to the fears of superstition. Children of all ranks—those of the poor in the streets, and such as belong to the better classes in their houses—appear fantastically decorated, not unlike the English chimney-sweepers on May-day, with caps of gilt and coloured paper, and coats made of the *Crusade Bulls* of the preceding year. In this attire they keep up an incessant din the whole day, crying, as they sound their drums and rattles, *Aserrar la vieja ; la picara pelleja :* "Saw down the old woman, the roguish b—ch." About midnight, parties of the common people parade the streets, knocking at every door, and repeating the same words. I understand that they end this revel by sawing in two, the figure of an old woman, which is meant as the emblem of Lent.

There is little ground, however, for these peevish feelings against old Lent, among the class that exhibits them most; for few of the poorer inhabitants of large towns taste any meat in the course of the year, and, living as they do upon a very scanty pittance of bread and pulse, can ill afford to confine themselves to one meal in the four-and-twenty hours. The privations of the fasting season are felt chiefly by that numerous class who, unable

the other hand, a strong sense of religious duty; submit like unwilling slaves to the unwelcome task which they dare not omit. Many, however, fall off before the end of Lent, and take to their breakfasts and suppers under the sanction of some good-natured Doctor, who declares fasting injurious to their health. Others, whose healthy looks would belie the dispensing physician, compound between the Church and their stomachs by adding an ounce of bread to the cup of chocolate which, under the name of *Parvedad*, our divines admit as a venial infraction. There is, besides, a fast-day supper, which was introduced by those good souls the primitive Monks at their evening conferences, where, finding that an empty stomach was apt to increase the hollowness of their heads, they allowed themselves a crust of bread and a glass of water, as a support to their fainting eloquence. This relaxation of the primitive fast took the name of *Collatio*, or conference, which it preserves among us. The Catholic casuists are not agreed, however, on the quantity of bread and vegetables, (for any other food is strictly excluded from the *collation*,) which may be allowed without being guilty of a *deadly sin*. The *Probabilistæ* extend this liberty as far as six ounces by weight, while the *Probabilioristæ* will not answer for the safety of a hungry soul, who indulges beyond four ounces. Who shall decide when doctors disagree? I have known an excellent man who weighed his food on these occasions till he

brought it within some grains of four ounces. But few are inclined to take the matter so seriously, and, confiding in the deceitful balance of their eyes, use a system of weights in which four ounces fall little short of a pound.*

PASSION, OR HOLY WEEK.

Pandite, nunc, Helicona, Deæ, might I say, in the true spirit of a native of Seville, when entering upon a subject which is the chief pride of this town. To tell the honest truth, we are *quizzed* every where for our conceit of these solemnities; and it is a standing joke against the *Sevillians*, that on the arrival of the King in summer, it was moved in the *Cabildo*, or town corporation, to repeat the Passion-week for the amusement of his Majesty. It must be owned, however, that our Cathedral service on that solemn Christian festival yields not in impressiveness to any ceremonies of modern worship, to dispel their superstitious fear, and wanting, on

* The Casuists are divided into *Probabilistæ* and *Probabilioristæ*. The first, among whom were the Jesuits, maintain that a certain degree of probability as to the lawfulness of an action is enough to secure against sin. The second, supported by the *Dominicans* and the *Jansenists* (a kind of Catholic Calvinists, condemned by the Church) insist on the necessity of always taking the *safest*, or most probable side. The French proverb *Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien*, is perfectly applicable to the practical effects of these two systems, as they are observed in Spain.

with which I am acquainted, either by sight or description.

It is impossible to convey in words an adequate idea of architectural grandeur. The dimensions of a temple do not go beyond a certain point in augmenting the majesty of effect. A temple may be so gigantic as to make the worshippers mere pigmies. An immense structure, though it may be favourable to contemplation, must greatly diminish the effect of such social rites as aim at the imagination through the senses. I have been told by a native of this town, who visited Rome, and on whose taste and judgment I greatly depend, that the service of the Passion-week at Saint Peter's, does not produce a stronger effect on the mind than that of our Cathedral. If this impression did not arise from the power of early habit, I should account for it from the excessive magnitude of the first temple in Christendom. The practice, also, of confining the most striking and solemn ceremonies to the Sixtine Chapel seems to shew that the Romans find the Church of Saint Peter unfavourable to the display of religious pomp. I shall add, though fearful of venturing too far upon a subject with which I am but slightly acquainted, that the ancients appear to have been careful not to diminish the effect of their public worship by the too large dimensions of the temples.

The size of our Cathedral seems to me happily adapted to the object of the building. Three hun-

dred and ninety-eight feet long by two hundred and ninety-one broad—the breadth distributed into five aisles, formed by one hundred and four arches, of which those of the centre are one hundred and thirty-four feet high, and the rest ninety-six—remove the limits of an undivided structure enough to require that effort of the eye and pause of the mind before we conceive it as a whole, which excites the idea of grandeur. This, I believe, is the impression which a temple should produce. To aim at more is to forget the solemn performances for which the structure is intended. Let the house of prayer, when solitary, appear so ample as not to exclude a single suppliant in a populous town; yet let the throng be visible on a solemn feast. Let the loftiness of the aisles soften the noise of a moving multitude into a gentle and continuous rustling; but let me hear the voice of the singers and the peals of the organ returned in deep echoes; not lost in the too distant vaults.

The simultaneous impression of architectural and ritual magnificence produced at the Cathedral of Seville is, I conceive, difficult to be rivalled. The pillars are not so massive as to obstruct the sight at every turn; and were the influence of modern taste strong enough to prevail over the canonical vanity which blocks up the middle of every Cathedral with the clumsy and absurd inclosure of the choir, it would be difficult to imagine a more striking view than that which our Church presents on Holy

Thursday.—In one respect, and that a most important one, it has the advantage over Saint Peter's at Rome. The scene of filth and irreverence which, according to travellers, sometimes disgusts the eye and revolts the mind at the Church of the Vatican —those crowds of peasants and beggars, eating, drinking, and sleeping, on Christmas eve, within the precincts of the temple; are not to be seen at Seville. Our Church, though almost thronged day and night on the principal festivals, is not profaned by any external mark of indevotion. The strictest watch is kept by members of the chapter appointed for that purpose, who, attended by their vergers, go their rounds for the preservation of order. The exclusion of every kind of seats from the Church, though rather inconvenient for the people, prevents its being made a lounging-place; and, besides allowing the beautiful marble pavement to appear unbroken, avoids that dismal look of an empty theatre, which benches or pews give to churches in the intervals of divine service.

Early on Palm-Sunday the melancholy sound of the *Passion-bell* announces the beginning of the solemnities for which the fast of Lent is intended to prepare the mind. This bell is one of the largest which are made to revolve upon pivots. It is moved by means of two long ropes, which, by swinging the bell into a circular motion, twine gently at first, round the massive arms of a cross, of which the bell forms the foot, and the head its

counterpoise. Six men then draw back the ropes till the enormous machine conceives a sufficient impetus to coil them in an opposite direction; and thus alternately, as long as ringing is required. To give this bell a tone appropriate to the sombre character of the season, it has been cast with several large holes disposed in a circle round the top—a contrivance which, without diminishing the vibration of the metal, prevents the distinct formation of any musical note, and converts the sound into a dismal clangour.

The chapter, consisting of about eighty resident members, in their choral robes of black silk with long trains and hoods, preceded by the inferior ministers, by thirty clergymen, in surplices, whose deep bass voices perform the plain or Ambrosian chaunt, and by the band of wind-instruments and singers, who execute the more artificial strains of modern or counterpoint music; move in a long procession round the farthest aisles, each holding a branch of the oriental or date palm, which, overtopping the heads of the assembled multitude, nod gracefully, and bend into elegant curves at every step of the bearers. For this purpose, a number of palm-trees are kept with their branches tied up together, that, by the want of light, the more tender shoots may preserve a delicate yellow tinge. The ceremony of blessing these branches is solemnly performed by the officiating priest, previously to the procession; after which they are sent by the

clergy to their friends, who tie them to the iron bars of the balconies, to be, as they believe, a protection against lightning.

At the long church-service for this day, the organ is silent, the voices being supported by hautboys and bassoons. All the altars are covered with purple or grey curtains. The holy vestments, during this week, are of the first-mentioned colour, except on Friday, when it is changed for black. The four accounts of our Saviour's passion appointed as gospels for this day, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, are dramatized in the following manner. Outside of the gilt-iron railing, which incloses the presbytery, are two large pulpits of the same materials, from one of which, at the daily high-mass, the subdeacon chaunts the epistle, as the deacon does the gospel from the other. A moveable platform with a desk, is placed between the pulpits on the *Passion-days* ; and three priests or deacons, in *albes* (the white vestment, over which the dalmatic is worn by the latter, and the chasuble by the former) appear on these elevated posts, at the time when the gospel should be said. These officiating ministers are chosen among the singers in holy orders ; one a bass, another a tenor, and the third a counter-tenor. The tenor chaunts the narrative, without changing from the key note, and makes a pause whenever he comes to the words of the interlocutors mentioned by the Evangelist. In those passages the words of our Saviour are sung by the

bass, in a solemn strain. The counter-tenor, in a more florid style, personates the inferior characters, such as Peter, the Maid, and Pontius Pilate. The cries of the priests and the multitude, are imitated by the band of musicians within the choir.

PASSION-WEDNESDAY.

The mass begins within a white veil, which conceals the officiating priest and ministers, and the service proceeds in this manner till the words "the veil of the temple was rent in twain" are chaunted. At this moment the veil disappears, as if by enchantment, and the ears of the congregation are stunned with the noise of concealed fire-works, which are meant to imitate an earthquake.

The evening service named *Tinieblas* (darkness) is performed this day after sunset. The cathedral, on this occasion, exhibits the most solemn and impressive aspect. The high altar, concealed behind dark grey curtains which fall from the height of the cornices, is dimly lighted by six yellow-wax candles, while the gloom of the whole temple is broken in large masses by wax torches, severally fixed on each pillar of the centre aisle, at about one-third of its length from the ground. An elegant candlestick of brass, from fifteen to twenty feet high, is placed, this and the following evening, between the choir and the altar, holding thirteen candles, twelve of yellow, and one of bleached wax, distributed on the two sides of the triangle which

terminates the machine. Each candle stands by a brass figure of one of the apostles. The white candle occupying the apex, is allotted to the Virgin Mary. At the conclusion of each of the twelve psalms appointed for the service, one of the yellow candles is extinguished, till, the white taper burning alone, it is taken down and concealed behind the altar. Immediately after the ceremony, the *Miserere,* as we call the fifty-first psalm, set, every other year, to a new strain of music, is sung in a grand style. This performance lasts neither more nor less than one hour. At the conclusion of the last verse the clergy break up abruptly without the usual blessing, making a thundering noise by clapping their moveable seats against the frame of the stalls, or knocking their ponderous *breviaries* against the boards, as the Rubric directs.

THURSDAY IN THE PASSION WEEK.

The ceremonies of the high mass (the only one which is publicly performed on this and the next day) being especially intended as a remembrance of the last supper, are, very appropriately, of a mixed character—a splendid commemoration which leads the mind from gratitude to sorrow. The service, as it proceeds, rapidly assumes the deepest hues of melancholy. The bells, which were joining in one joyous peal from every steeple, cease at once, producing a peculiar heavy stillness, which

none can conceive but those who have lived in a populous Spanish town, long enough to lose the conscious sense of that perpetual tinkling which agitates the ear during the day, and great part of the night.

A host, consecrated at the mass, is carried with great solemnity to a temporary structure called the *Monument*, erected in every church with more or less splendour, according to the wealth of the establishment. There it is deposited in a silver urn, generally shaped like a sepulchre, the key of which, hanging from a gold chain, is committed by the priest to the care of one of the most respectable inhabitants of the parish, who wears it round his neck as a badge of honour, till the next morning. The key of the Cathedral Monument is entrusted to the archbishop, if present, or to the dean in his absence.

The striking effect of the last-mentioned structure is not easily conceived. It fills up the space between four arches of the nave, rising in five bodies to the roof of the temple. The columns of the two lower tiers, which, like the rest of the monument, imitate white marble filletted with gold, are hollow, allowing the numerous attendants who take care of the lights that cover it from the ground to the very top, to do their duty during four-and-twenty hours, without any disturbance or unseemly bustle. More than three

thousand pounds of wax, besides one hundred and sixty silver lamps, are employed in the illumination.

The gold casket set with jewels, which contains the host, lies deposited in an elegant temple of massive silver, weighing five hundred and ten marks, which is seen through a blaze of light, on the pediment of the monument. Two members of the chapter in their choral robes, and six inferior priests in surplices, attend on their knees before the shrine, till they are relieved by an equal number of the same classes, at the end of every hour. This act of adoration is performed without interruption from the moment of depositing the host in the casket till that of taking it out the next morning. The cathedral, as well as many others of the wealthiest churches, is kept open and illuminated the whole night.

One of the public sights of the town, on this day, is the splendid cold dinner which the archbishop gives to twelve paupers, in commemoration of the Apostles. The dinner is to be seen laid out on tables, filling up two large rooms in the palace. The twelve guests are completely clothed at the expense of their host; and having partaken of a more homely dinner in the kitchen, are furnished with large baskets to take away the splendid commons allotted to each in separate dishes, which they sell to the *gourmands* of the town. Each,

besides, is allowed to dispose of his napkin, curiously made up into the figure of some bird or quadruped, which people buy both as ornaments to their china cupboards, and as specimens of the perfection to which some of our poorer nuns have carried the art of plaiting.

At two in the afternoon the archbishop, attended by his chapter, repairs to the Cathedral, where he performs the ceremony, which, from the notion of its being literally enjoined by our Saviour, is called the *Mandatum*. The twelve paupers are seated on a platform erected before the high altar; and the prelate, stripped of his silk robes, and kneeling successively before each, washes their feet in a large silver bason.

About this time the processions, known by the name of *Cofradías*, (Confraternities) begin to move out of the different churches to which they are attached. The head of the police appoints the hour when each of these pageants is to appear in the square, where stand the Town Hall, and the *Audiencia* or Court of Justice. From thence their route to the Cathedral, and out of it, to a certain point, is the same for all. These streets are lined by two rows of spectators of the lower classes, the windows, being occupied by those of a higher rank. An order is previously published by the town-crier, directing the inhabitants to decorate their windows, which they do by hanging out the showy silk and chintz counterpanes of their beds. The processions themselves, except one which enjoys the pri-

vilege of parading the town in the dead of night, have little to attract the eye or affect the imagination. Their chief object is to convey groups of figures, as large as life, representing different scenes of our Saviour's passion.

There is something remarkable in the established and characteristic marks of some figures. The Jews are distinguished by long aquiline noses. Saint Peter is completely bald. The dress of the Apostle John is green, and that of Judas Iscariot yellow; and so intimately associated is this circumstance with the idea of the traitor, that it has brought that colour into universal discredit. It is, probably, from this circumstance (though yellow may have been allotted to Judas from some more ancient prejudice,) that the Inquisition has adopted it for the *Sanbeníto*, or coat of infamy, which persons convicted of heresy are compelled to wear. The red hair of Judas, like Peter's baldness, seems to be agreed upon by all the painters and sculptors of Europe. *Judas hair* is a usual name in Spain; and a similar appellation, it should seem, was used in England in Shakspeare's time. "His hair," says Rosalind, in As you like it, "is of the dissembling colour:" to which Celia answers—"Something browner than Judas's."

The midnight procession derives considerable effect from the stillness of the hour, and the dress of the attendants on the sacred image. None are admitted to this religious act but the members of that *fraternity*; generally young men of fashion.

They all appear in a black tunic, with a broad belt so contrived as to give the idea of a long rope tied tight round the body; a method of penance commonly practised in former times. The face is covered with a long black veil, falling from a sugar-loaf cap three feet high. Thus arrayed, the nominal *penitents* advance, with silent and measured steps, in two lines, dragging a train six feet long, and holding aloft a wax-candle of twelve pounds, which they rest upon the hip-bone, holding it obliquely towards the vacant space between them. The veils, being of the same stuff with the cap and tunic, would absolutely impede the sight but for two small holes, through which the eyes are seen to gleam, adding no small effect to the dismal appearance of such strange figures. The pleasure of appearing in a disguise, in a country where masquerades are not tolerated by the Government, is a great inducement to our young men for subscribing to this religious association. The disguise, it is true, does not in the least relax the rules of strict decorum which the ceremony requires; yet the mock penitents think themselves repaid for the fatigue and trouble of the night by the fresh impression which they expect to make on the already won hearts of their mistresses, who, by preconcerted signals, are enabled to distinguish their lovers, in spite of the veils and the uniformity of the dresses.

It is scarcely forty years since the disgusting exhibition of people streaming in their own blood,

was discontinued by an order of the Government. These *penitents* were generally from among the most debauched and abandoned of the lower classes. They appeared in white linen petticoats, pointed white caps and veils, and a jacket of the same colour, which exposed the naked shoulders to view. Having, previously to their joining the procession, been scarified on the back, they beat themselves with a cat-o'-nine-tails, making the blood run down to the skirts of their garment. It may be easily conceived that religion had no share in these voluntary inflictions. There was a notion afloat that this act of penance had an excellent effect on the constitution; and while vanity was concerned in the applause which the most bloody flagellation obtained from the vulgar, a still stronger passion looked forward to the irresistible impression it produced on the strapping belles of the lower ranks.

GOOD FRIDAY.

The crowds of people who spent the evening and part of the night of Thursday in visiting the numerous churches where the host is entombed, are still seen, though greatly thinned, performing this religious ceremony, till the beginning of service at nine. This is, perhaps, the most impressive of any used by the Church of Rome. The altars, which, at the end of yesterday's mass, were pub-

licly and solemnly stripped of their cloths and rich table-hangings by the hands of the priest, appear in the same state of distressed negligence. No musical sound is heard, except the deep-toned voices of the psalm, or plain chaunt singers. After a few preparatory prayers, and the dramatized history of the Passion, already described, the officiating priest, (the archbishop at the cathedral) in a plain albe or white tunic, takes up a wooden cross six or seven feet high, which, like all other crosses, has for the last two weeks of Lent been covered with a purple veil; and standing towards the people, before the middle of the altar, gradually uncovers the sacred emblem, which both the clergy and laity worship upon their knees. The prelate is then unshod by the assistant ministers, and taking the cross upon his right shoulder, as our Saviour is represented by painters on his way to Calvary, walks alone from the altar to the entrance of the presbytery or chancel, and lays his burden upon two cushions. After this, he moves back some steps, and approaching the cross with three prostrations, kisses it, and drops an oblation of a piece of money, into a silver dish. The whole chapter, having gone through the same ceremony, form themselves in two lines, and repair to the monument, from whence the officiating priest conveys the deposited host to the altar, where he communicates upon it without consecrating any wine. Here the service terminates abruptly; all candles and lamps are extin-

guished; and the tabernacle, which throughout the year contains the sacred wafers, being left open, every object bespeaks the desolate and widowed state of the church, from the death of the Saviour to his resurrection.

The ceremonies of Good-Friday being short and performed at an early hour, both the gay and the devout would be at a loss how to spend the remainder of the day but for the grotesque *Passion Sermons* of the suburbs and neighbouring villages; and the more solemn performance known by the name of *Tres Horas*—three hours.

The practice of continuing in meditation from twelve to three o'clock of this day—the time which our Saviour is supposed to have hung on the cross—was introduced by the Spanish Jesuits, and partakes of the impressive character which the members of that order had the art to impart to the religious practices by which they cherished the devotional spirit of the people. The church where the *three hours* are kept, is generally hung in black, and made impervious to day-light. A large crucifix is seen on the high altar, under a black canopy, with six unbleached wax-candles, which cast a sombre glimmering on the rest of the church. The females of all ranks occupy, as usual, the centre of the nave, squatting or kneeling on the matted ground, and adding to the dismal appearance of the scene, by the colour of their veils and dresses.

Just as the clock strikes twelve, a priest in his

cloak and cassock ascends the pulpit, and delivers a preparatory address of his own composition. He then reads the printed Meditation on the *Seven Words*, or Sentences spoken by Jesus on the cross, allotting to each such a portion of time as that, with the interludes of music which follow each of the readings, the whole may not exceed three hours. The music is generally good and appropriate, and, if a sufficient band can be collected, well repays to an amateur the inconvenience of a crowded church, where, from the want of seats, the male part of the congregation are obliged either to stand or kneel. It is, in fact, one of the best works of Haydn, composed, a short time ago, for some gentlemen of Cadiz, who shewed both their taste and liberality in thus procuring this masterpiece of harmony for the use of their country. It has been lately published in Germany, under the title of "Sette Parole."

Every part of the performance is so managed that the clock strikes three about the end of the meditation, on the words *It is finished.*—The description of the expiring Saviour, powerfully drawn by the original writer of the *Tres Horas*, can hardly fail to strike the imagination when listened to under the influence of such music and scenery; and when, at the first stroke of the clock, the priest rises from his seat, and in a loud and impassioned voice, announces the consummation of the awful and mysterious sacrifice, on whose painful and

bloody progress the mind has been dwelling so long; few hearts can repel the impression, and still fewer eyes can conceal it. Tears bathe every cheek, and sobs heave every female bosom.—After a parting address from the pulpit, the ceremony concludes with a piece of music, where the powers of the great composer are magnificently displayed in the imitation of the disorder and agitation of nature which the Evangelists relate.

The *Passion Sermons* for the populace might be taken for a parody of the *Three Hours*. They are generally delivered, in the open air, by friars of the Mendicant Orders, in those parts of the city and suburbs which are chiefly, if not exclusively, inhabited by the lower classes. Such gay young men, however, as do not scruple to relieve the dullness of Good-Friday with a ride, and feel no danger of exposing themselves by any unseasonable laughter, indulge not unfrequently in the frolic of attending one of the most complete and perfect sermons of this kind, at the neighbouring village of Castilleja.

A moveable pulpit is placed before the church door, from which a friar, possessed of a stentorian voice, delivers an *improved* history of the Passion, such as was revealed to Saint Bridget, a Franciscan nun, who, from the dictation of the Virgin Mary, has left us a most minute and circumstantial account of the life and death of Christ and his mother. This yearly narrative, however, would have lost most of its interest but for the scenic

illustrations which keep up the expectation and rivet the attention of the audience. It was formerly the custom to introduce a living Saint Peter —a character which belonged by a natural and inalienable right to the baldest head in the village — who acted the Apostle's denial, swearing *by Christ*, he did not know the man. This edifying part of the performance is omitted at Castilleja; though a practised performer crows with such a shrill and natural note as must be answered with a challenge by every cock of spirit in the neighbourhood. The flourish of a trumpet announces, in the sequel, the publication of the sentence passed by the Roman governor; and the town crier delivers it with legal precision, in the manner it is practised in Spain, before an execution. Hardly has the last word been uttered, when the preacher, in a frantic passion, gives the crier the *lie direct*, cursing the tongue that has uttered such blasphemies.* He then invites an angel to contradict both Pilate and the Jews: when, obedient to the orator's desire, a boy gaudily dressed, and furnished with a pair of gilt pasteboard wings, appears at the window, and proclaims the *true verdict of Heaven.* Sometimes in the course of the preacher's narrative, an image of the Virgin Mary is made to meet that of Christ, on his way to Calvary, both taking an affectionate leave in the street. The appearance, however, of the

* "*Calla, maldita lengua,*" the usual exclamation which stops the crier, has become a jocular expression in Andalusia.

Virgin bearing a handkerchief to collect a sum for her son's burial, is never omitted, both because it melts the whole female audience into tears, and because it produces a good collection for the convent. The whole is closed by the *Descendimiento*, or unnailing a crucifix as large as life from the cross; an operation performed by two friars, who, in the character of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, are seen with ladders and carpenters' tools, letting down the jointed figure, to be placed on a bier and carried into the church in the form of a funeral.

I have carefully glided over such parts of this absurd performance as would shock many an English reader even in narrative. Yet such is the strange mixture of superstition and profaneness in the people for whose gratification these scenes are exhibited, that though any attempt to expose the indecency of these shows would rouse their zeal "to the knife," I cannot venture to translate the jokes and sallies of wit that are frequently heard among the Spanish peasantry upon these sacred topics.

SATURDAY BEFORE EASTER.

I have not been able to ascertain the reason why the Roman Catholic celebrate the resurrection this morning, with an anticipation of nearly four and twenty hours, and yet continue the fast till midnight or the beginning of Sunday. This practice is, I believe, of high antiquity.

The service begins this morning without either the sound of bells or of musical instruments. The *Paschal Candle* is seen by the north-side of the altar. But, before I mention the size of that used at our cathedral, I must protest against all charges of exaggeration. It is, in fact, a pillar of wax, nine yards in height, and thick in proportion, standing on a regular marble pedestal. It weighs eighty *arrobas*, or two thousand pounds, of twelve ounces. This candle is cast and painted new, every year; the old one being broken to pieces on the Saturday preceding Whitsunday, the day when part of it is used for the consecration of the baptismal font. The sacred torch is lighted with the *new fire*, which this morning the priest strikes out of a flint, and burns during service till Ascension-day. A chorister in his surplice climbs up a gilt-iron rod, furnished with steps like a flag-staff, and having the top railed in, so as to admit of a seat on a level with the end of the candle. From this *crow's nest*, the young man lights up and trims the wax pillar, drawing off the melted wax with a large iron ladle.

High mass begins this day behind the great veil, which for the two last weeks in Lent covers the altar. After some preparatory prayers, the priest strikes up the hymn *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. At this moment the veil flies off, the explosion of fireworks in the upper galleries reverberates in a thousand echoes from the vaults of the church, and the four-

and-twenty large bells of its tower, awake, with their discordant though gladdening sounds, those of the one hundred and forty-six steeples which this religious town boasts of. A brisk firing of musketry, accompanied by the howling of the innumerable dogs, which, unclaimed by any master, live and multiply in our streets, adds strength and variety to this universal din. The firing is directed against several stuffed figures, not unlike the Guy Fawkes of the fifth of November; which are seen hanging by the neck on a rope, extended across the least frequented streets. It is then that the pious rage of the people of Seville is vented against the archtraitor Judas, whom they annually hang, shoot, draw and quarter in effigy.

The church service ends in a procession about the aisles. The priest bears the host in his hands, visible through glass, as a picture within a medallion. The sudden change from the gloomy appearance of the church and its ministers, to the simple and joyous character of this procession, the very name of *Pasqua Florida*, the flowery Passover, and, more than the name, the flowers themselves, which well-dressed children, mixed with the censer-bearers, scatter on the ground, crowd the mind and heart with the ideas, hopes, and feelings of renovated life, and give to this ceremony, even for those who disbelieve the personal presence in the host, of a Deity triumphant over death; a character of inexpressible tenderness.

MAY CROSS.

The rural custom of electing a May Queen among the country belles is, I understand, still practised in some parts of Spain. The name of *Maia*, given to the handsomest lass of the village, who, decorated with garlands of flowers, leads the dances in which the young people spend the day, shews how little that ceremony has varied since the time of the Romans. The villagers, in other provinces, declare their love by planting, during the preceding night, a large bough or a sapling, decked with flowers, before the doors of their sweethearts.

As most of our ancient church festivals were contrived as substitutes for the Pagan rites, which the Christian priesthood could not otherwise eradicate, we still have some remnants of the sanc tified *May-pole* in the little crosses, which the children ornament with flowers, and place upon tables, holding as many lighted tapers as, from the contributions of their friends, they can afford to buy.

I have heard that the children at Cambridge dress up a figure called the *May-lady*, and setting it upon a table, beg money of the passengers. The difference between this and the analogous Spanish custom arose, in all probability, from the respective prevalence in either country of the *May-pole*, or the *Maia*. A figure of the Virgin, which the Reformation has reduced to a nameless as well as

shapeless puppet, took place of the latter, while the cross was employed to banish the former. I am inclined to believe that the illuminated grottos of oyster-shells, for which the London children beg about the streets, are the representatives of some Catholic emblem, which had its day as a substitute for a more classical idol. I was struck in London with the similarity of the plea which the children of both countries urge in order to obtain a halfpenny. The "it is but once a year, sir!" often reminded me of the

La Cruz de Mayo
que no come ni bebe
en todo el año.

The Cross of May
Remember pray,
Which fasts a year and feasts a day.

CORPUS CHRISTI.

This is the only day in the year when the consecrated Host is exposed, about the streets, to the gaze of the adoring multitude. The triumphal character of the procession which issues forth from the principal church of every town of note in the kingdom, and a certain dash of bitter and threatening zeal which still lies disguised under the ardent and boundless devotion displayed on this festival, shew but too clearly the spirit of defiance which suggested it in the heat of the controversies upon the real presence. It is within my memory that

the taste for dignity and decorum which this Metropolitan Church has ever evinced in the performance of religious worship, put an end to the boisterous and unbecoming appendages which an inveterate custom had annexed to this pageant.

At a short distance in front of the procession appeared a group of seven gigantic figures, male and female, whose dresses, contrived by the most skilful tailors and milliners of the town, regulated the fashion at Seville for the ensuing season. A strong man being concealed under each of the giants and giantesses, the gaping multitude were amused at certain intervals with a very clumsy dance, performed by the figures, to the sound of the pipe and tabor. Next to the Brobdignag dancers, and taking precedence of all, there followed, on a moveable stage, the figure of a Hydra encircling a castle, from which, to the great delight of all the children of Seville, a puppet not unlike Punch, dressed up in a scarlet jacket trimmed with morrice-bells, used often to start up; and having performed a kind of wild dance, vanished again from view into the body of the monster. The whole of this compound figure bore the name of *Tarasca*, a word of which I do not know either the meaning or derivation. That these figures were allegorical no one can doubt who has any knowledge of the pageants of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It would be difficult, how-

ever, without the help of an obscure tradition, to guess that the giants in perriwigs and swords, and their fair partners in caps and petticoats, were emblems of the seven deadly sins. The Hydra, it should seem, represented Heresy, guarding the castle of Schism, where Folly, symbolized by the strange figure in scarlet, displayed her supreme command. This band of monsters was supposed to be flying in confusion before the triumphant sacrament.

Mixed with the body of the procession, there appeared three sets of dancers; the *Valencianos*, or natives of the kingdom of Valencia, who, in their national costume of loose waistcoats, puffed linen sleeves, bound at the wrists and elbows with ribbons of various colours, and broad white trowsers reaching only to the knees, performed a lively dance, mingling their steps with feats of surprising agility: after these followed the sword-dancers in the old martial fashion of the country: and last of all, the performers of an antiquated Spanish dance—I believe the *Chacona*, dressed in the national garb of the sixteenth century.

A dance of the last-mentioned description, and in a similar costume, is still performed before the high altar in the presence of the chapter, at the conclusion of the service on this day and the following se'nnight. The dancers are boys of be tween ten and fourteen, who, under the name of

*Seizes,** are maintained at the college which the Cathedral supports for the education of the acolytes, or inferior ministers. These boys, accompanied by a full orchestra, sing a lyric composition in Spanish, which, like the Greek chorusses, consists of two or three systems of metres, to which the dancers move solemnly, going through a variety of figures in their natural step, till, ranged at the conclusion of the song, in two lines facing each other as at the outset, they end with a gentle caper, rattling the castanets, which hitherto lay silent and concealed in their hands. That this grotesque performance should be allowed to continue, is, I believe, owing to the pride which this chapter take in the privilege, granted by the Pope to the dancers, of wearing their hats within view of the consecrated host—a liberty which the King himself cannot take, and which, if I am not misled by report, no one besides can boast of, except the Dukes of Altamira, who, upon certain occasions, clap on their hat, at the elevation of the host, and draw the sword, as if shewing their readiness to give a conclusive answer to any argument against transubstantiation.

The *Corpus Christi* procession begins to move out of the cathedral exactly at nine in the morning. It consists in the first place of the forty

* This name is, as far as I know, peculiar to Seville. The similarity of its sound and that of *sizars* used at Cambridge, seems to denote a common origin in the two words.

communities of friars who have convents in this town. They follow one another in two lines, according to the established order of precedence. The strangeness and variety of their dresses, no less than their collective numbers, would greatly strike any one but a Spaniard, to whom such objects are perfectly familiar.—Next appears the long train of relics belonging to the Cathedral, placed each by itself on a small stage moved by one or more men concealed under the rich drapery which hangs on its sides to the ground. Vases of gold and silver, of different shapes and sizes, contain the various portions of the inestimable treasure whereof the following is an accurate catalogue:

A tooth of Saint Christopher.

An agate cup used at Mass by Pope Saint Clement, the immediate successor of Saint Peter.

An arm of Saint Bartholomew.

A head of one of eleven thousand virgins.

Part of Saint Peter's body.

Ditto of Saint Lawrence.

Ditto of Saint Blaise.

The bones of the Saints Servandus and Germanus.

Ditto of Saint Florentius.

The Alphonsine tables, left to the Cathedral by King Alphonso the Wise, containing three hundred relics.

A silver bust of Saint Leander, with his bones.

A thorn from our Saviour's crown.

A fragment of the true cross.

Last of all appears the body of prebendaries and canons, attended by their inferior ministers. Such,

however, is the length of the procession, and the slow and solemn pace at which it proceeds, that, without a break in the lines, it takes a whole hour to leave the church. The streets, besides being hung up with more taste than for the processions of the Passion Week, are shaded all the way with a thick awning, and the pavement is strewed with rushes. An article of the military code of Spain obliges whatever troops are quartered in a town where this procession takes place, to follow it under arms; and if sufficient in number, to line the streets through which it is to pass.

Under all these circumstances, the first appearance of the host in the streets is exceedingly imposing. Encircled by jewels of the greatest brilliancy, surrounded by lighted tapers and enthroned on the massive, yet elegant temple of silver already mentioned when describing the *Monument*,* no sooner has it moved to the door of the church than the bells announce its presence with a deafening sound, the bands of military music mix their animating notes with the solemn hymns of the singers, clouds of incense rise before the moving shrine, and the ear is thrilled by the loud voice of command, and the clash of the arms which the kneeling soldiers strike down to the ground. When the concealed bearers of the shrine† present it at the top of the long street where the route commences, the multitudes which crowd both the pavement and

* See page 253. † See Letter II. p. 34.

windows, fall prostrate in profound adoration, without venturing to rise up till the object of their awe is out of sight. Flowers are often scattered from the windows, and the most beautiful nosegays adorn the platform of the moveable stage.

Close behind the host follows the archbishop, surrounded by his ecclesiastical retinue. One of his chaplains carries a large double cross of silver, indicative of metropolitan dignity. The train of the purple mantle is supported by another clergyman. These, like the rest of the prelate's attendants and pages, are young men of family, who disdain not this kind of service, in the expectation of high church preferment. But what gives all this state the most unexpected finish is an inferior minister in his surplice bearing a circular fan of richly embroidered silk about two feet in diameter, and attached to a silver rod six feet in length. At a convenient distance from the archbishop this fan is constantly waved, whenever during the summer months he attends the cathedral service, thus relieving him from the oppressive effects of his robes under the burning sun of Andalusia. This custom is, I believe, peculiar to Seville.

SAINT JOHN'S EVE.

Feelings far removed from those of devotion prevail in the celebration of the Baptist's festival. Whether it is the inviting temperature of a midsummer night, or some ancient custom connected

with the present evening, "Saint John," says the Spanish proverb, "Sets every girl a gadding." The public walks are crowded after sunset, and the exclusive amusement of this night, flirtation, or in the Andalusian phrase, *pelar la Pava,* (plucking the hen-turkey) begins as soon as the star-light of a summer sky, unbroken by the partial glare of lamps, enables the different groups to mix with a liberty approaching that enjoyed in a masquerade. Nothing in this kind of amusement posseses more zest than the chat through the iron bars of the lower windows, which begins about midnight. Young ladies, who can compose their mamas to sleep at a convenient hour, glide unperceived to the lower part of the house, and sitting on the window-sill, behind the lattice-work, which is used in this country instead of blinds, wait, in the true spirit of adventure, (if not pre-engaged to a dull, common-place matrimonial prelude,) for the chance sparks, who, mostly in disguise, walk the streets from twelve till dawn. Such, however, as the mere love of mirth induces to pass the night at the windows, generally engage another female companion, a sister, a friend, and often a favourite maid, to take a share in the conversation, and by a change of characters to puzzle their out-of-doors visiters. These, too, when not *seriously* engaged, walk about in parties, each assuming such a character as they consider themselves most able to support. One pretends to

be a farmer just arrived from the country, another a poor mechanic, this a foreigner speaking broken Spanish, that a *Gallego*, making love in the still less intelligible dialect of his province. The gentlemen must come provided with no less a stock of sweet-meats (which from the circumstance of being folded each separately in a piece of paper, are called *Papelillos*) than of lively small talk and wit. A deficiency in the latter is unpardonable; so that a *bore*, or *Majadero*,* if not ready to quit the post when bidden, is soon left to contemplate the out-side of the window-shutters. The habitual distance at which the lower classes are kept from those above them, prevents any disagreeable meddling on their part; and the ladies who indulge in these frolics, feel perfectly safe from intrusion and impertinence.

The sauntering about the fields, practised by the populace of Madrid, on the same night, is there called "*Cogér la Verbena*," gathering Vervain; an appellation evidently derived from an ancient superstition which attributed preternatural powers to that plant when gathered at twelve o'clock on St. John's Eve. The nocturnal rambles of the present times, much as they might alarm the guardians of public morals, if such an office existed among us, need not give any uneasiness on the score of witchcraft to the Reverend Inquisitors.

* A word derived from the verb *Majar*, to beat in a mortar.

SAINT BARTHOLOMEW.

The commemoration of this Apostle takes place on the 24th of August. It is not, however, to record any external circumstance connected with this church festival—which, in fact, is scarcely distinguished by any peculiar solemnity—that I take notice of it, but for a private superstitious practice which strikes me as a most curious modification of one used by the pious housewives in the days of Augustus.

Intermittent fevers, especially the Tertian and Quartan, are very common in most parts of Andalusia. The season when they chiefly attack the inhabitants, is summer ; and whether the unbounded use, which all sorts of people, but particularly the poor, make of grapes and melons, contributes to the production of the disease, or whether the mere coincidence of the two facts is, as usual, taken for cause and effect ; it is an established opinion in this part of the country that, if fruit is not the original source of the ague, an abstinence from that kind of food is indispensable to avoid a relapse into that treacherous complaint.

That there should be a particular Saint, to superintend the medical department of curing the ague, is so perfectly consistent with the Catholic notions, that a deficiency on that point would more surprise me than to find a toe not under the influence of some heavenly aspect in the *Vox Stellarum*, which was one of my wonders in England.

That province, in fact, is allotted to Saint Bartholomew. Now, nine-pence is a sufficient inducement for any of our sons of Esculapius to mount his mule as well as his wig, and dose you with the most compound electuary he is master of; but how to fee a supernatural doctor, would be a puzzling question, were it not that tradition teaches the method of propitiating every individual mentioned in the calendar. Each Saint has a peculiar fancy—from Saint *Anthony of Padua*, who will often delay the performance of a miracle till you plunge him into a well, or nail his print topsy-turvy upon the wall, to Saint *Pasqual Baylon*, who is readiest to attend such as accompany their petitions with some lively steps and a final caper. As to Saint Bartholomew, nothing will induce him to cure an ague but a vow to abstain, on the day of his festival, from all food except bread and fruit—the very means which, but for his miraculous interference, would, according to common opinion, cause either a return, or an aggravation of the complaint.

Mark, now, the vow employed by the Roman matrons for the cure of intermittents. It is recorded by Horace, and thus translated by Francis:—

"Her child beneath a quartan fever lies
For full four months, when the fond mother cries,
Sickness and health are thine, all-powerful Jove;
Then, from my son this dire disease remove,

And when your priests thy solemn fast proclaim,
Naked the boy shall stand in Tiber's stream.
Should chance, or the physician's art, upraise
Her infant from the desperate disease;
The frantic dame shall plunge her hapless boy,
Bring back the fever, and the child destroy."*

The existence of Heathen superstitions adapted to Christian worship is too common to excite surprise; nor is it any similarity in the externals of the two practices I have just compared, that constitutes their analogy. My mind is struck alone by the unchangeable spirit of superstition, which, attributing in all ages and nations, our own passions and feelings to supernatural beings, endeavours to obtain their favour by flattering their vanity. Both the ancient Roman and modern Spanish vow for the cure of the ague, seem to set at defiance the supposed and most probable causes of the disease, from which the devotees seek deliverance; as if to secure to the patron deities the undoubted and full honour of the miracle.

* Jupiter, ingentes qui das adimisque dolores,
(Mater ait pueri menses jam quinque cubantis),
Frigida si puerum quartana reliquerit, illo
Mane, die quo tu indicis jejunia, nudus
In Tiberi stabit.—Casus, medicusve levarit
Ægrum ex precipiti; mater delira necabit
In gelidâ fixum ripâ, febrimque reducet.

HOR. SAT. L. II. 3. 288.

DETACHED PREJUDICES AND PRACTICES.

Having mentioned the superstitious method used in this country for the cure of the ague, I wish to introduce a short account of some popular prejudices more or less connected with the prevalent religious notions. I shall probably add a few facts under this head, for no better reason than that I do not know how to class them under any other.

There is an allusion in Hudibras to an antiquated piece of gallantry which I believe may be illustrated by a religious custom to which I was sometimes subjected in my childhood. The passage runs thus:

> I'll carve your name on barks of trees
> With true love-knots and flourishes, ...
> *Drink every letter on't in stum,*
> *And make it brisk Champaigne become.**

The latter compliment is paid by sick persons to the Virgin Mary, in the hope of recovering health through her intercession. An image is worshipped at one of the principal parish churches in this town, under the title of the *Virgin of Health.* The charm of this denomination draws numbers to the sanctuary, which, being in the centre of the wealthiest population, derives considerable splendour from their offerings. In exchange for these they often receive a sheet of printed paper containing at regular intervals the words *Salus infirmorum,*

* Hudibras, Part II. Canto I.

in very small type. In case of illness, one of the lines is cut off, and, being coiled into a small roll, the patient swallows it in a glass of water.

The room where a person lies dangerously ill, generally contains more relics and amulets than the chimney-piece of an invalid, under the care of a London apothecary, holds phials of all shapes and sizes. The friends of a lady near her confinement, vie with each other in procuring her every kind of supernatural assistance for the trying hour; when, strange to say, she is often dressed in the episcopal robes of some saint, which are supposed to act most effectually when in contact with the body of the distressed petitioner. But whatever patrons the ladies may choose to implore in those circumstances, there are two whose assistance, by means of relics, pictures, or the apparel of their images, is never dispensed with. The names of these invisible accoucheurs are *Saint Raymundus Nonnatus*, and *Saint Vincent Ferrer*. That the former should be considered as peculiarly interested in such cases, having, as his addition implies, been extracted from the womb of his dead mother, is perfectly clear and natural. But, *Ferrer's* sympathy requires a slight explanation.

That saint—a native of Valencia, and a monk of the order of Saint Dominic, possessed the gift of miracles in such a degree, that he performed them almost unconsciously, and not unfrequently in a sort of frolic. Being applied to, on a certain

occasion, by a young married lady, whom the idea of approaching maternity kept in a state of constant terror, the good-natured Saint desired her to dismiss her fears, as he was determined to take upon himself whatever inconvenience or trouble there might be in the case. Some weeks had elapsed, when the good Monk, who had forgotten his engagement, was heard in the dead of night roaring and screaming in a manner so unusual, and so little becoming a professional Saint, that he drew the whole community to his cell. Nothing, for a time, could relieve the mysterious sufferings, and though he passed the rest of the night *as well as could be expected*, the fear of a relapse would have kept his afflicted brethren in painful suspense, had not the grateful husband of the timid lady, who was the cause of the uproar, taken an early opportunity to return thanks for the *unconscious* delivery of his consort. Saint Vincent, though according to tradition perfectly unwilling to stand a second time proxy for nervous ladies, is, from a very natural sympathy, constantly in readiness to act as the male Lucina of the Spanish matrons.

FUNERALS OF INFANTS AND MAIDS.

From the birth to the death of a child the passage is often so easy that I shall make it an apology for the abruptness of the present transition. The moral accountableness of a human being, as I have

observed before, does not, according to Catholic divines, begin till the seventh year; consequently such as die without attaining that age, are, by the effect of their baptism, indubitably entitled to a place in heaven. The death of an infant is therefore a matter of rejoicing to all but those in whose bosoms nature speaks too loud to be controlled by argument. The friends who call upon the parents, contribute to aggravate their bitterness by *wishing them joy* for having increased the number of angels. The usual address on these occasions is *Angelitos al Cielo!* Little Angels to Heaven—an unfeeling compliment, which never fails to draw a fresh gush of tears from the eyes of a mother. Every circumstance of the funeral is meant to *force* joy upon the mourners. The child, dressed in white garments, and crowned with a wreath of flowers, is followed by the officiating priest in silk robes of the same colour; and the clergymen who attend him to the house from whence the funeral proceeds to the church, sing in joyful strains the psalm *Laudate, pueri, Dominum,* while the bells are heard ringing a lively peal. The coffin, without a lid, exposes to the view the little corpse covered with flowers, as four well-dressed children bear it, amidst the lighted tapers of the clergy. No black dress, no signs of mourning whatever are seen even among the nearest relatives; the service at church bespeaks triumph, and the organ mixes its enlivening sounds with the hymns, which

thank death for snatching a tender soul, when through a slight and transient tribute of pain, it could obtain an exemption from the power of sorrow. Yet no funerals are graced with more tears; nor can dirges and penitential mournings produce even a shadow of the tender melancholy which seizes the mind at the view of the formal and affected joy with which a Catholic infant is laid in his grave.

A young unmarried woman among us

> ——— "is allowed her virgin crants,*
> Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
> Of bell and burial."

In addition to the wreath of flowers, a palm-branch is put into a maiden's hand; an emblem of victory against the allurements of love, which many a poor fair conqueror would have willingly exchanged for a regular defeat. They are dressed in every other respect like nuns, and the coffin is covered with a black velvet pall, as in all other funerals.

The preceding passage in Hamlet begins with an allusion to a very ancient custom, which is still observed in Spain at the monumental crosses erected on the highways to those who have perished by the hands of robbers.

> "For charitable prayers,
> Sherds, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her."

* Garlands.

This is literally done by every peasant when passing one of those rude and melancholy monuments. A heap of stones is always observed at the foot of the cross; not, however, *instead* of prayers, as the passage would seem to imply, but as a tale by which the number of *Paternosters* said by the compassionate passengers, might be reckoned. The antiquity of this *Christianized* custom appears, from a passage in the Book of Proverbs, to be very great. The proverb or sentence, translated as it is in the margin of the English Bible, runs thus: "As he that putteth a precious stone in a heap, so is he that giveth honour to a fool."*

The Latin version which, you must know, is of great antiquity, and was made the basis of Jerom's, about the middle of the fourth century, renders this proverb in a remarkable manner. *Sicut qui mittit lapidem in acervum Mercurii; ita qui tribuit insipienti honorem.* As he that casts a stone on the *heap of Mercury*, &c. &c. Now, bearing in mind that stones are at this day thrown upon certain graves in Spain; that, according to the passage in Shakspeare, a similar custom seems to have prevailed in other parts of Europe; and that Jerom believed he rendered the spirit of the Hebrew proverb by translating the word which the English Divines doubted, whether to construe *a sling*, or *a heap of stones*, by the phrase, *acervus Mercurii*; a

* Proverbs xxvi. 8.

deity, whose statues were frequently placed over sepulchres among the Romans—bearing all this in mind, I say, it appears to me that the custom of covering some graves with stones thrown at random, must have existed in the time of the writer of the Proverbs. Perhaps I may be allowed to conjecture that it originated in the punishment of stoning, so common among the Jews; that passengers flung stones, as a mark of abhorrence, on the heap which hid the body of the criminal; that the primitive Christians, many of whom were Jews, followed the same method of shewing their horror of heathen tombs, till those places came to be known, in Jerom's time, by the appellation of *heaps of Mercury*; that modern Christians applied the same custom to the graves of such as had been deemed unworthy of consecrated ground; and, finally, that the frequency of highway robberies and murders in Spain detached the custom from the idea of crime, and softened a mark of detestation into one of prayer and intercession for the unfortunate victim.

SPANISH CHRISTIAN NAMES.

The extraordinary devotion of the Catholics, especially in this country, to the Virgin Mary, and the notion, supported by the clergy, that as many Saints as have their names given to a child at baptism, are, in some degree, engaged to take it under their protection, occasion a national peculiarity

not unworthy of remark. In the first place few have less than half a dozen names entered in the parish register, a list of which is given to the priest that he may read them out in the act of christening the child. It would be difficult indeed, under these circumstances, for most people to know exactly their own names, especially if, like myself, they have been favoured with *eleven*. The custom of the country, however, allows every individual to forget all but the first in the list. In our devotion to the Virgin, we have hitherto avoided the strange solecism of the French *Monsieur Marie*, though almost every Spaniard has *Maria* for a second name.

The titles given to the innumerable images of the Virgin Mary, which supply the usual names of our females, might occasion the most ludicrous puns or misnomers, if habit had not diverted the mind from their real meaning. No names are more common than *Encarnacion*, Incarnation—*Concepcion*, Conception—*Visitacion*, Visitation—*Maravillas*, Marvels—*Regla*, Rule—*Dolores*, Pains—*Agustias*, Anguishes—*Soledad*, Solitude—*Natividad*, Nativity, &c. Other titles of the Virgin afford, however, more agreeable associations. Such are *Estrella*, Star—*Aurora*—*Amparo*, Protection—*Esperanza*, Hope—*Salud*, Health—*Pastora*, Shepherdess—*Rocio*, Dew, &c. But words, as it is said of the chameleon, take the colour of the objects to which they are attached; and I have

known *Pains* and *Solitudes* among our Andalusians, who, had they been more numerous, might have produced a revolution in the significations of the language.

CHRISTMAS.

Since no festival of any interest takes place between summer and this season, it is already time to conclude these notes with the expiring year.

It was the custom, thirty or forty years since, among families of fortune, to prepare, for an almost public exhibition, one or two rooms of the house, where, upon a clumsy imitation of rocks and mountains, a great number of baby-houses and clay figures, representing the commonest actions of life, were placed amidst a multitude of lamps and tapers. A half ruined stable, surrounded by sheep and cattle, was seen in the front of the room, with the figures of Joseph, Mary, and some shepherds, kneeling in adoration of the child in the manger—an act which an ass and an ox imitated with the greatest composure. This collection of puppets, called *Nacimiento*, is still, though seldom intended for show, set up in many houses, both for the amusement and the religious gratification of the family and their more intimate friends.

At the period which I have just mentioned, the *Nacimientos* were made a pretext for collecting a large party, and passing several nights in dancing,

and some of the national amusements described in the article of *Carnival.* The rooms being illuminated after sunset, not only the friends of the family were entitled to enjoy the festivities of the evening, but any gentleman giving his name at the door, might introduce one or more ladies, who, if but known by sight to the master of the house, would be requested to join in the amusements which followed. These were singing, dancing, and not unfrequently, speeches, taken from the old Spanish plays, and known by the name of *Relaciones.* Recitation was considered till lately as an accomplishment both in males and females; and persons who were known to be skilled in that art, stood up at the request of the company to deliver a speech with all the gesticulation of our old school of acting, just as others gratified their friends by performing upon an instrument. A slight refreshment of the Christmas cakes, called *Oxaldres,* and sweet wines or home-made *liqueurs,* was enough to free the house from the imputation of meanness: thus mirth and society were obtained at a moderate expense. But the present *Nacimientos* seldom afford amusement to strangers; and with the exception of singing carols to the sound of the *zambomba,* little remains of the old festivities.

I must not, however, omit a description of the noisy instrument whose no less sounding name I have just mentioned. It is general in most parts of Spain at this season, though never used at any

other. A slender shoot of reed (Arundo Donax) is fixed in the centre of a piece of parchment, without perforating the skin, which, softened by moisture, is tied, like a drum-head, round the mouth of a large earthen jar. The parchment, when dry, acquires a great tension, and the reed being slightly covered with wax, allows the clenched hand to glide up and down, producing a deep hollow sound of the same kind as that which proceeds from the tambourine when rubbed with the middle finger.

The church service on Christmas Eve begins at ten in the night, and lasts till five in the morning. This custom is observed at every church in the town; nor does their number, or the unseasonableness of the hour, leave the service unattended in any. The music at the Cathedral is excellent. It is at present confined to part of the Latin prayers, but was, till within a few years, used in a species of dramatic interludes in the vulgar tongue, which were sung, not acted, at certain intervals of the service. These pieces had the name of *Villancicos*, from *Villano*, a clown; shepherds and shepherdesses being the interlocutors in these pastorals. The words, printed at the expense of the Chapter, were distributed to the public, who still regret the loss of the wit and humour of the Swains of Bethlehem.

The custom of the country requires a formal call between Christmas and Twelfth-day, on all one's acquaintance; and tables are placed in the house squares, or *Patios*, to receive the cards of the vi-

siters. Presents of sweetmeats are common between friends; and patients send to their medical attendants the established acknowledgment of a turkey; so that Doctors in great practice open a kind of public market for the disposal of their poultry. These turkeys are driven in flocks by gipseys, who patiently walk in the rear of the ungovernable phalanxes, from several parts of Old Castile, and chiefly from Salamanca. The march which they perform is of no less than four hundred miles, and lasts about one half of the year. The turkeys, which are bought from the farmers mere chickens, acquire their full growth, like your fashionables, in travelling, and seeing the world.

LETTER X.

Madrid, 1807.

My removal to this capital has been sudden and unexpected. My friend Leandro, from whom I am become inseparable, was advised by his physicians to seek relief from a growing melancholy—the effect of a mortal aversion to his professional duties, and to the intolerant religious system with which they are connected—in the freedom and dissipation of the court; and I found it impossible to tear myself from him.

The journey from Seville to Madrid, a distance of about two hundred and sixty English miles, is usually performed in heavy carriages drawn by six mules, in the space of from ten to eleven days. A party of four persons is formed by the coachman, (Mayoràl) who fixes the day and hour for setting out, arranges the length of the stages, prescribes the time for getting up in the morning, and even takes care that every passenger attends mass on a Sunday, or any other church festival during the journey. As it was, however, of importance not

to delay my friend's removal from Seville, we chose the more expensive conveyance by posting, and having obtained a passport, set off in an open and half foundered chaise—the usual vehicles till within thirty miles of Madrid.

You will form some idea of our police and government, from the circumstance of our being obliged to take our passport, not for Madrid, but Salamanca, in order thus to smuggle ourselves into the capital. The minister of *Gracia y Justicia,* or home department, Caballero, one of the most willing and odious instruments of our arbitrary court, being annoyed by the multitude of place-hunters, whom we denominate Pretendientes, who flocked to Madrid from the provinces; has lately issued an order forbidding all persons whatever, to come to the capital, unless they previously obtain a royal license. To await the King's pleasure would have exposed us to great inconvenience, and probably to a positive denial. But as the minister's order was now two or three months old, a period at which our court-laws begin to grow obsolete, and we did not mean to trouble *his excellency;* we trusted to luck and our purse, as to any little obstacles which might arise from the interference of inferior officers.

I shall not detain you with a description of our journey—the delays at the post-houses—our diminished haste at Valdepeñas for the sake of its delicious wine just as it is drawn from the immense earthen-jars, where it is kept buried in the ground;

and, finally, the ugly but close and tight post-chaises drawn by three mules abreast, which are used from Aranjüez to Madrid. I do not love description, probably because I cannot succeed in it. You will, therefore, have the goodness to apply for a picture of this *town* (for I wish you to remark that it is not reckoned among our *cities*) in Burgoing, Townsend, or some other professed traveller. My narrative shall, as hitherto, be limited to what these gentlemen were not likely to see or understand with the accuracy and distinctness of a native.

The influence of the court being unlimited in Spain, no object deserves a closer examination from such as wish to be acquainted with the moral state of this country. I must, therefore, begin with a sketch of the main sources of that influence, carefully excluding every report which has reached me through any but the most respectable channels, or an absolute notoriety. The fountain-head of power and honours among us has, till lately, been the Queen, a daughter of the late Duke of Parma, a very ugly woman, now fast approaching old age, yet affecting youth and beauty. She had been but a short time married to the present King, then Prince of Asturias, when she discovered a strong propensity to gallantry, which the austere and jealous temper of her father-in-law Charles III. was scarcely able to check. Her husband, one of those happy beings born to derive bliss from ignorance, has ever preserved a strong and exclusive

attachment to her person. This attachment, combined with a most ludicrous simplicity, closes his mind against every approach of suspicion.

The first favourite of the Princess that awakened the King's jealousy, was a gentleman of his son's household, named Ortíz. Concerned for the honour of the Prince, no less than for the strictness of morals, which, from religious principles, he had anxiously preserved in his court; he issued an order, banishing Ortíz to one of the most distant provinces. The Princess, unable to bear this separation, and well acquainted with the character of her husband, engaged him to obtain the recall of Ortíz from the King. Scrupulously faithful to his promise, the young Prince watched the first opportunity to entreat his father's favour, and falling upon his knees, asked the boon of Ortíz's return, gravely and affectingly urging that "his wife Louisa was quite unhappy without him, as he used to amuse her amazingly." The old King, surprised and provoked by this wonderful simplicity, turned his back upon the good-natured petitioner, exclaiming: *Calla, tonto! Déxalo irse: Qué simple que eres!* "Hold your tongue, booby! Let him go: What a simpleton thou art!"

Louisa deprived, however, of her *entertaining* Ortíz, soon found a substitute in a young officer named Luis de Godoy. He was the eldest of three brothers, of an ancient but decayed family, in the province of Estremadura, who served together in

the Horse-Guards, a corps exclusively composed of gentlemen, the lowest ranks being filled by commissioned officers. Scarcely had this new attachment been formed, when the old King unmercifully nipped it in the bud, by a decree of banishment against Don Luis. The royal order was, as usual, so pressing, that the distressed lover could only charge his second brother Manuel with a parting message, and obtain a promise of his being the bearer of as many tokens of constancy and despair, as could be safely transmitted by the post.

It is a part of the cumbrous etiquette of the Spanish Court to give a separate guard to every member of the royal family, though all live within the King's palace; and to place sentinels with drawn swords at the door of every suite of apartments. This service is performed without interruption day and night, by the military corps just mentioned. Manuel Godoy did not find it difficult to be on duty in the Prince's guard, as often as he had any letter to deliver. A certain tune played on the flute, an instrument with which that young officer used to beguile the idle hours of the guard, was the signal which drew the Princess to a private room, to which the messenger had secret, but free access.

There is every reason to believe that *Luis's* amorous dispatches had their due effect for some weeks, and that his royal mistress lived almost exclusively upon their contents. Yet time was working a sad

revolution in the fortunes of the banished lover. Manuel grew every day more interesting, and the letters less so, till the faithless confidant became the most *amusing* of mortals to the Princess, and consequently a favourite with her good-natured husband.

The death of the old King had now removed every obstacle to the Queen's gallantries, and Manuel Godoy was rapidly advanced to the highest honours of the state, and the first ranks of the army. But the new sovereign did not yet feel quite easy upon the throne; and the dying King's recommendation of his favourite Floridablanca, by prolonging that minister's power, still set some bounds to the Queen's caprices. Charles IV., though perfectly under his wife's control, could not be prevailed upon to dismiss an old servant of his father without any assignable reason; and some respect for public opinion, a feeling which seldom fails to cast a transient gleam of hope on the first days of every reign, obliged the Queen herself to employ other means than a mere act of her will in the ruin of the premier. He might, however, have preserved his place for some time, and been allowed to retire with his honours, had not his jealousy of the rising Godoy induced him to oppose the tide of favour which was now about to raise that young man to a Grandeeship of the first class. To provide for the splendour of that elevated rank, the Queen had induced her husband to bestow upon Godoy a princely

estate, belonging to the crown, from which he was to take the title of the Duke de la Alcúdia. Floridablanca, either from principle, or some less honourable motive, thought it necessary to oppose this grant as illegal; and having induced the King to consult the Council of Castille upon that point, endeavoured to secure an answer agreeable to his wishes, by means of a letter to his friend the Count Cifuentes. Most unluckily for the minister, before this letter arrived from San Ildefonso, where the court was at that time, the president was seized with a mortal complaint, and the dispatches falling into the hands of his substitute Cañada, were secretly transmitted to the Queen. It is needless to add, that the report of the council was favourable, that Godoy was made Duke de la Alcúdia, and that both he and the Queen were now wholly bent upon their opposer's ruin.

During Floridablanca's influence with the King, a manuscript satire had been circulated against that minister, in which he was charged with having defrauded one *Salucci*, an Italian banker connected with the Spanish Government. Too conscious, it should seem, of the truth of the accusation, Floridablanca suspected none but the injured party of being the contriver and circulator of the lampoon. The obnoxious composition was, however, written in better Spanish than Salucci could command, and the smarting minister could not be satisfied without punishing the author. His spies having informed

him that the Marquis de Manca, a man of wit and talent, was intimate at Salucci's, he had no need of farther proofs against him. The banker was immediately banished out of the kingdom, and the poet confined to the city of Burgos, under the inspection and control of the civil authorities.

But the time was now arrived when these men, who were too well acquainted with the state of Spain to look for redress at the hands of justice, were to obtain satisfaction from the spirit of revenge which urged the Queen to seek the ruin of her husband's minister. Charles IV. being informed of Floridablanca's conduct towards Salucci and Manca, the last was recalled to Court. His enemy's papers, including a large collection of *billets-doux*, were seized and put into the Marquis's hands, to be used as documents in a secret process instituted against the minister: who, according to his own rules of justice, was, in the mean time, sent a prisoner to the fortress of Pamplona. His confinement, however, was not prolonged beyond the necessary time to ruin him in the King's opinion; and upon the marriage of two of the Royal Princesses, an *indulto*, or pardon, was issued, by which, though declared guilty of embezzling forty-two millions of *reals*, he was enlarged from his close confinement, and allowed to reside at Murcia, his native town.

I am not certain, however, whether Floridablanca's dismissal did not shortly precede his ac-

cusation by *Manca*, as the immediate consequence of his efforts to make the King join the coalition against France after the death of Louis XVI. Charles IV. was, it seems, the only sovereign in Europe, who felt no alarm at the fate of the unfortunate Louis; and had more at heart the recollection of a personal slight from his cousin, than all the ties of common interest and blood. Charles had learned that, on his accession to the throne of Spain, the usual letter of congratulation being presented for signature to Louis, that monarch humourously observed, that he thought the letter hardly necessary, "for the poor man," he said, "is a mere cypher, completely governed and henpecked by his wife." This joke had made such a deep impression on the King, as to draw from him, when Louis was decapitated, the unfeeling and almost brutal remark that "a gentleman so ready to find fault with others, did not seem to have managed his own affairs very well." The Count de Aranda, who, in the cabinet councils, had constantly voted for peace with France, was appointed, in February, 1792, to succeed Floridablanca. But the turn of affairs, and the pressing remonstrances of the allied sovereigns, altered the views of Charles; and having, at the end of seven months, dismissed Aranda with all the honours of his office, Godoy, then Duke of Alcudia, was appointed his successor to begin hostilities against France. I need not enter into a narrative of that ill-conducted and disastrous war. An ap-

pearance of success cheered up the Spaniards, always ready to fight with their neighbours on the other side of the Pyrenees. But the French armies having received reinforcements, would have soon paid a visit to Charles at Madrid, if his favourite minister, with more address than he ever discovered in his subsequent management of political affairs, had not concluded and ratified the peace of Basle.

The fears of the whole country at the progress of the French arms had been so strong, that peace was hailed with enthusiasm; and the public joy, on that occasion, would have been unalloyed but for the extravagant rewards granted to Godoy for concluding it. A new dignity above the grandeeship was created for him alone, and, under the title of *Prince of the Peace,* Godoy was placed next in rank to the Princes of the royal blood.

There was but one step in the scale of honours which could raise a mere subject higher than the Queen's favour had exalted Godoy—a marriage into the royal family. But the only distinction which love seemed not blind enough to confer on the favourite, he actuallly owed to the jealousy of his mistress.

Among the beauties whom the hope of the young minister's favour drew to Madrid from all parts of Spain, there was an unmarried lady of the name of Tudó, a native of Malaga, whose charms both of person and mind would have captivated a much less susceptible heart than Godoy's. From the moment

she was presented by her parents, La Tudó (we are perfectly unceremonious in naming ladies of all ranks) obtained so decided a supremacy above the numerous sharers in the favourite's love, that the Queen, who had hitherto overlooked a crowd of occasional rivals, set her face against an attachment which bid fair to last for life. It had, indeed, subsisted long enough to produce unquestionable proof of the nature of the intimacy, in a child whose birth, though not blazoned forth as if sanctioned by public opinion, was not hidden with any consciousness of shame. A report being circulated at court, that the Prince of the Peace was secretly married to La Tudó, the Queen, in a fit of jealousy, accused him to the King as guilty of ingratitude, in thus having allied himself to a woman of no birth, without the slightest mark of deference to his royal benefactors. The King, whose fondness for Godoy had grown above his wife's control, seemed inclined to discredit the story of the marriage; but, being at that time at one of the royal country residences called *Sitios*—the *Escurial,* I believe, where the ministers have apartments within the palace; the Queen led her husband through a secret passage, to a room where they surprised the lovers taking their supper in a comfortable *tête-à-tête.*

The feelings excited by this sight must have been so different in each of the royal couple, that one can scarcely feel surprised at the strangeness of the result. Godoy had only to deny the mar-

riage to pacify the King, whose good nature was ready to make allowances for a mere love-intrigue of his favourite. The Queen, hopeless of ever being the exclusive object of the gallantries of a man to whom she was chained by the blindest infatuation, probably feared lest the step she had taken should tear him away from her presence. A slave to her vehement passions, and a perfect stranger to those delicate feelings which vice itself cannot smother in some hearts, she seemed satisfied with preventing her chief rival from rising above her own rank of a mistress; and, provided the place was occupied by one to whom her paramour was indifferent, wished to see him married, and be herself the match-maker.

The King's late brother, Don Luis, who, in spite of a cardinal's hat, and the archbishoprick of Seville, conferred on him before he was of age to take holy orders, stole a kind of left-handed marriage with a Spanish lady of the name of Vallabríga; had left two daughters and a son, under the guardianship of the archbishop of Toledo. Though not, hitherto, allowed to take their father's name, these children were considered legitimate; and it is probable that the King had been desirous of putting them in possession of the honours due to their birth, long before the Queen proposed the eldest of her nieces both as a reward for Godoy's services, and a means to prevent in future such sallies of youthful folly as divided his attention between pleasure and

the service of the crown. These or similar reasons (for history must content herself with conjecture, when the main springs of events lie not only behind the curtain of state, but those of a four-post bed) produced in the space of a few weeks, a public recognition of Don Luis's children, and the announcemnet of his eldest daughter's intended marriage with the Prince of the Peace.

The vicious source of Godoy's unbounded power, the temper of the Court where he enjoyed it, and the crowd of flatterers which his elevation had gathered about him, would preclude all expectation of any great or virtuous qualities in his character. Yet there are facts connected with the beginning of his government which prove that he was not void of those vague wishes of doing good, which, as they spring up, are "choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this world." I have been assured by an acute and perfectly disinterested observer, whose high rank gave him free access to the favourite, during part of the period when with the title of Duke de la Alcúdia he was at the head of the Spanish ministry, that "there was every reason to believe him active, intelligent, and attentive in the discharge of his duty; and that he was perfectly exempt from all those airs and affectation which men who rise by fortune more than merit, are apt to be justly accused of." Though, like all the Spanish youth brought up in the military profession, he was himself unlettered, he shewed great respect

for talents and literature in the formation of the ministry which succeeded his own, when, from his new rank, and his marriage into the royal family, he was considered above the duties of office.

Saavedra, whom he made first minister of state, is a man of great natural quickness, improved both by reading and the observation of real life; but so irresolute of purpose, so wavering in judgment, so incapable of decision, that, while in office, he seemed more fit to render public business interminable, than to direct its course in his own department. Jovellanos, appointed to be Saavedra's colleague, is justly considered as one of the living ornaments of our literature. Educated at Salamanca in one of the *Colégios Mayóres,* before the reform which stripped those bodies of their honours and influence, he was made a judge in his youth, and gradually ascended to one of the supreme councils of the nation. His upright and honourable conduct in every stage of his life, both public and private, the urbanity of his manners, and the formal elegance of his conversation, render him a striking exemplification of the old Spanish *Cavallero.* With the virtues and agreeable qualities of that character, he unites many of the prejudices peculiar to the period to which it belongs. To a most passionate attachment to the privileges and distinctions of blood, he joins a superstitious veneration for all kinds of external forms. The strongest partialities warp his

fine understanding, confining it, upon numerous subjects, to distorted or limited views. As a judge and a man of letters, he was respected and admired by all. As a chief justice in any of our provincial courts of law, he would have been a blessing to the people of his district; while the dignified leisure of that situation would have enabled him to enrich our literature with the productions of his elegant mind. As a minister, however, through whose hands all the gifts of the Crown were to be distributed to a hungry country, where two-thirds of the better classes look up to patronage for a comfortable subsistence, he disappointed the hopes of the nation. At Court, his high notions of rank converted his rather prim manner into downright stiffness; and his blind partiality for the natives of Asturias, his province—probably because he thought them the purest remnant of Gothic blood in Spain—made him the most unpopular of ministers. Instead of promoting the welfare of the nation by measures which gradually, and upon a large scale, might counteract the influence of a profligate Court, he tried to oppose the Queen's established interference in detail. She once made a personal application to Jovellanos in favour of a certain candidate for a prebendal stall. The minister gave her a flat denial, alleging that the person in question had not qualified himself at any of the universities. " At which of them," said the Queen, " did you

receive your education?"—"At Salamanca, Madam."—"What a pity," rejoined she, "that they forgot to teach you manners!"

While employed in this petty warfare, which must have soon ended in his dismissal, a circumstance occurred, which, though it was the means of reconciling the Queen to Jovellanos for a time, has finally consigned him to a fortress in Majorca, where to this day he lingers under a confinement no less unjust than severe.

The ceremony of Godoy's marriage was scarcely over, when he resumed his intimacy with La Tudó in the most open and unguarded manner. The Queen, under a relapse of jealousy, seemed so determined to clip the wings of her spoiled favourite, that Jovellanos was deceived into a hope of making this pique the means of reclaiming his patron, if not to the path of virtue, at least to the rules of external propriety. Saavedra, better acquainted with the world, and well aware that Godoy could, at pleasure, resume any degree of ascendancy over the Queen, entered reluctantly into the plot. Not so Jovellanos. Treating this Court intrigue as one of the regular lawsuits on which he had so long practised his skill and impartiality, he could not bring himself to proceed without serving a notice upon the party concerned. He accordingly forwarded a remonstrance to the Prince of the Peace, in which he reminded him of his public and conjugal duties, in the most forcible style of forensic and moral

eloquence. The Queen, in the mean time, had worked up her husband into a feeling approaching to anger against Godoy, and the decree for his banishment was all but signed before the offending gallant thought himself in such danger as to require the act of submission, which alone could restore him to the good graces of his neglected mistress. He owed, however, his safety to nothing but Saavedra's indecision and dilatoriness. That minister could not be persuaded to present the decree of banishment for the royal signature, till the day after it had been agreed upon. Godoy, in the mean time, obtained a private interview with the Queen, who, under the influence of a long-checked and returning passion, in order to exculpate herself, represented the Ministers—the very men whom Godoy had raised into power—as the authors of the plot; and probably attributed the plan to Jovellanos, making him, from this moment, the marked object of the favourite's resentment.

The baffled Ministers, though not immediately dismissed, must have felt the unsteadiness of the ground on which they stood, and dreaded the revenge of an enemy, who had already shewn, in the case of Admiral Malaspina, that he was both able and willing to wreak it on the instruments of the Queen's jealousy. That officer, an Italian by birth, had just returned from a voyage round the globe, performed at the expense of this Government, when the Queen, who found it difficult to regulate the

feelings of her husband towards Godoy, to the sudden and rapid variations of her own, induced her confidant, the Countess of Matallana, to engage him in drawing up a memorial to the King, containing observations on the public and private conduct of the favourite, and representing him in the blackest colours. Malaspina was at this time preparing the account of his voyage for publication, with the assistance of a conceited sciolist, a Sevillian friar called Padre Gil, who, in our great dearth of real knowledge, was looked upon as a miracle of erudition and eloquence. The Admiral, putting aside his charts and log-books, eagerly collected every charge against Godoy which was likely to make an impression upon the King; while the friar, inspired with the vision of a mitre ready to drop on his head, clothed them in the most florid and powerful figures which used to enrapture his audience from the pulpit. Nothing was now wanting but the Queen's command to spring the mine under the feet of the devoted Godoy, when the intended victim, informed of his danger, and taking advantage of one of those soft moments which made the Queen and all her power his own, drew from her a confession of the plot, together with the names of the conspirators. In a few days, Malaspina found himself conveyed to a fortress, where, with his voyage, maps, scientific collections, and every thing relating to the expedition, he remains completely forgotten; while the reverend writer of the memo-

rial was forwarded under an escort to Seville, the scene of his former literary glory, to be confined in a house of correction, where juvenile offenders of the lower classes are sent to undergo a salutary course of flogging.

The Queen was preparing the dismissal of Saavedra and Jovellanos, when a dangerous illness of the former brought forward a new actor in the intricate drama of Court intrigue, who, had he known how to use his power, might have worked the complete ruin of its hero.

The First Clerk of the Secretary of State's Office—a place answering to that of your under-secretary of State—was a handsome young man, called Urquijo. His name is probably not unknown to you, as he was a few years ago with the Spanish Ambassador in London, where his attachment to the French jacobins and their measures could not fail to attract some notice, from the unequivocal heroic proof of self-devotion which he shewed to that party. It was, in fact, an attempt to drown himself in the pond at Kensington Gardens, upon learning the peace made by Buonaparte with the Pope at Tolentino; a treaty which disappointed his hopes of seeing the final destruction of the Papal See, and Rome itself a heap of ruins, in conformity to a decree of the French Directory. Fortune, however, having determined to transform our brave *Sans-Culotte* into a courtier, afforded him a timely rescue from the muddy deep; and when, under the care of

Doctor V——, he had been brought to understand how little his drowning would influence the events of the French war, he returned to Madrid, to wield his pen in the office where his previous qualification of *Joven de Lenguas,** had entitled him to a place, till he rose, by seniority, to that of Under-Secretary.

Every Spanish minister has a day appointed in the course of the week—called *Dia de Despacho*—when he lays before the King the contents of his portfolio, to dispose of them according to his Majesty's pleasure. The Queen, who is excessively fond of power,† never fails to attend on the occasions. The minister, during this audience, stands, or, if desired, sits on a small stool near a large table placed between him and the King and Queen. The love of patronage, not of business, is, of course, the object of the Queen's assiduity; while nothing but the love of gossip enables her husband to endure the drudgery of these sittings. During Saavedra's ministry, his Majesty was highly delighted with the premier's powers of conversation, and his inexhaustible fund of good stories. The portfolio was laid upon the table; the Queen mentioned the names of her *protegés,* and the King, referring all

* Young men are appointed to go abroad with the Spanish ambassadors in order to learn foreign languages, and thus qualify themselves as diplomatists.

† It is a well known fact that there are letters in existence addressed by her, while Princess of Asturias, to the judges in the provinces, asking their votes in pending lawsnits.

other business to the decision of the minister, began a comfortable chat, which lasted till bed-time. When Saavedra was taken with that sudden and dangerous illness which Godoy's enemies were inclined to attribute to poison, (a suspicion, however, which both the favourite's real good nature, and his subsequent lenity towards Saavedra, absolutely contradict) the duty of carrying the portfolio to the King devolved upon the Under-secretary. Urquijo's handsome person and elegant manners made a deep impression upon the Queen; and ten thousand whispers spread the important news the next morning, that her Majesty had desired the young clerk to take a seat.

This favourable impression, it is more than probable, was heightened by a fresh pique against Godoy, whose growing disgust of his royal mistress, and firm attachment to La Tudó, offered her Majesty daily subjects of mortification. She now conceived the plan of making Urquijo, not only her instrument of revenge, but, it is generally believed, a substitute for the incorrigible favourite. But in this amorous Court even a Queen can hardly find a vacant heart; and Urquijo's was too deeply engaged to one of Godoy's sisters, to appear sensible of her Majesty's condescension. He mustered, however, a sufficient portion of gallantry to support the Queen in her resolution of separating Godoy from the Court, and depriving him of all influence in matters of government.

It is, indeed, surprising, that the Queen's resentment proceeded no farther against the man who had so often provoked it, and that his disgrace was not attended with the usual consequences of degradation and imprisonment. Many and powerful circumstances combined, however, in Godoy's favour —the King's almost parental fondness towards him —the new minister's excessive conceit of his own influence and abilities, no less than his utter contempt of the discarded favourite—and, most of all, the Queen's unextinguished and ever reviving passion, backed by her fears of driving to extremities a man who had, it is said, in his power, the means of exposing her without condemning himself.

During Saavedra's ministry, and that interval of coldness produced by Godoy's capricious gallantries, which enabled his enemies to make the first attempt against him; his royal mistress had conceived a strong fancy for one Mallo, a native of Caraccas, and then an obscure *Garde du Corps*. The rapid promotion of that young man, and the display of wealth and splendour which he began to make, explained the source of his advancement to every one but the King. Godoy himself seems to have been stung with jealousy, probably not so much from his rival's share in the Queen's affections, as from the ill-concealed vanity of the man, whose sole aim was to cast into shade the whole Court. Once, as the King and Queen, attended by Godoy and other grandees of the household, were

standing at the balcony of the royal seat El Pardo, Mallo appeared at a distance, driving four beautiful horses, and followed by a brilliant retinue. The King's eye was caught by the beauty of the equipage, and he inquired to whom it belonged. Hearing that it was Mallo's—" I wonder," he said, " how that fellow can afford to keep such horses."— " Why, please your Majesty," replied Godoy, " the scandal goes, that he himself is kept by an ugly old woman—I quite forget her name."

Mallo's day of prosperity was but short. His vanity, coxcombry and folly, displeased the King, and alarmed the Queen. But in the first ardour of her attachments, she generally had the weakness of committing her feelings to writing; and Mallo possessed a collection of her letters. Wishing to rid herself of that absurd, vain fop, and yet dreading an exposure, she employed Godoy in the recovery of her written tokens. Mallo's house was surrounded with soldiers in the dead of night; and he was forced to yield the precious manuscripts into the hands of his rival. The latter, however, was too well aware of their value to deliver them to the writer; and he is said to keep them as a powerful charm, if not to secure his mistress's affection, at least to subdue her fits of fickleness and jealousy. Mallo was soon banished and forgotten.

The two ministers, Saavedra and Jovellanos, had been rusticated to their native provinces; the first, on account of ill health; the second, from the

Queen's unconquerable dislike. Urquijo, who seems to have been unable either to gain the King's esteem, or fully to return the Queen's affection, could keep his post no longer than while the latter's ever ready fondness for Godoy, was not awakened by the presence of its object. The absence of the favourite, it is generally believed, might have been prolonged, by good policy, and management of the King on the part of Urquijo, if his rashness and conceit of himself had ever allowed him to suspect that any influence whatever, was equal to that of his talents and person. Instead of strongly opposing a memorial of the Prince of the Peace, asking permission to kiss their majesties' hands upon the birth of a daughter, borne to him by the Princess his wife, Urquijo imagined the Queen so firmly attached to himself, that he conceived no danger from this transient visit of his offended rival. Godoy made his appearance at Court; and from that moment Urquijo's ruin became inevitable. His hatred of the Court of Rome had induced the latter to encourage the translation of a Portuguese work, against the extortions of the Italian *Dataria*, in cases of dispensations for marriage within the prohibited degrees. Thinking the public mind sufficiently prepared by that work, he published a royal mandate to the Spanish bishops, urging them to resume their ancient rights of dispensation. This step had armed against its author the greater part of the clergy; and the Prince of

the Peace found it easy to alarm the King's conscience by means of the Pope's nuncio, Cardinal *Casoni*, who made him believe that his minister had betrayed him into a measure which trespassed upon the rights of the Roman Pontiff. I believe that Godoy's growing dislike of the Inquisition spared Urquijo the horrors of a dungeon within its precincts. He had not, however, sufficient generosity to content himself with the banishment of his enemy to Guipuzcoa. An order for his imprisonment in a fortress followed him thither in a short time—a circumstance, which might raise a suspicion that Urquijo had employed his personal liberty to make a second attempt against the recalled favourite.

This supposition would be strongly supported by the general mildness of Godoy's administration, if one instance of cruel and implacable revenge were not opposed to so favourable a view of his conduct. Whether the Queen represented Jovellanos to the Prince of the Peace as the chief actor in the first plot which was laid against him, or that he charged that venerable magistrate with ingratitude for taking any share in a conspiracy against the man who had raised him to power; Godoy had scarcely been restored to his former influence, when he procured an order to confine Jovellanos in the Carthusian Convent of Majorca. The unmanliness of this second and long-meditated blow, roused the indignation of his fallen and hitherto silent adversary, call-

ing forth that dauntless and dignified inflexibility which makes him, in our days, so fine a specimen of the old Spanish character. From his confinement he addressed a letter to the King, exposing the injustice of his treatment in terms so removed from the servile tone of a Spanish memorial, so regardless of the power of his adversary, that it kindled anew the resentment of the favourite, through whose hands he well knew it must make its way to the throne. Such a step was more likely to aggravate than to obtain redress for his wrongs. The virtues, the brilliant talents, and pleasing address of Jovellanos had so gained upon the affections of the monks, that they treated him with more deference than even a minister in the height of his power could have expected. Godoy's spirit of revenge could not brook his enemy's enjoyment of this small remnant of happiness; and with a cruelty which casts the blackest stain on his character, he removed him to a fortress in the same island, where, under the control of an illiterate and rude governor, Jovellanos is deprived of all communication, and limited to a small number of books for his mental enjoyment. The character of the gaoler may be conceived from the fact of his not being able to distinguish a *work* from a *volume*. Jovellano's friends are not allowed to relieve his solitude with a variety of books, even to the number contained in the governor's instructions; for he reckons literary works by the piece, and a good edition of

Cicero, for instance, appears to him a complete library.*

Since his restoration to favour, the Prince of the Peace has been gradually and constantly gaining ascendancy. The usual titles of honour being exhausted upon him, the antiquated dignity of *High-Admiral* has been revived and conferred upon him, just at the time when your tars have left us without a navy. Great emoluments, and the address of *Highness* have been annexed to this dignity. A brigade of cavalry, composed of picked men from the whole army, has been lately given to the High-Admiral as a guard of honour. His power, in fine, though delegated, is unlimited, and he may be properly said to be the acting Sovereign of Spain. The King, by the unparalleled elevation of this favourite, has obtained his heart's desire in a perfect exemption from all sorts of employment, except shooting, to which he exclusively devotes every day of the year. Soler, the minister of finance, is employed to fleece the people; and Caballero, in the home department, to keep them in due ignorance and subjection. I shall just give you a sample of each of these worthies' minds and principles.—It has been the custom for centuries at Valladolid to make the Dominican Convent of that town a sort of bank for depositing sums of money, as it was done in the ancient temples, under similar circumstances of

* See Note K.

ignorance, of commerce and insecurity of property. Soler, being informed that the monks held in their hands a considerable deposit, declared "that it was an injury to the state to allow so much money to lie idle," and seizing it, probably for the Queen, whose incessant demands form the most pressing and considerable item of the Spanish budget, gave government-paper to the monks, which the creditors might sell, if they chose, at eighty per cent. discount.—Caballero, fearing the progress of all learning, which might disturb the peace of the Court, sent, not long since, a circular order to the Universities, forbidding the study of moral philosophy: "His Majesty," it was said in the order, "was not in want of philosophers, but of good and obedient subjects."

Under the active operation of this system, the Queen has the command of as much money and patronage as she desires; and finding it impracticable to check the gallantries of her *cher ami*, has so perfectly conquered her jealousy as to be able not only to be on the most amicable terms with him, but to emulate his love of variety in the most open and impudent manner.

I wish to have done with the monstrous heap of scandal, which the state of our Court has unavoidably forced into my narrative. Much, indeed, I leave untold; but I cannot omit an original and perfectly authentic story, which, as it explains the mystery of the King's otherwise inexplicable blind-

ness respecting his wife's conduct, justice requires to be made public. The world shall see that his Majesty's apathy does not arise from any disgraceful indifference for what is generally considered by men as a vital point of honour; but that the peace and tranquillity of his mind is grounded on a philosophical system — I do not know whether physical or moral—which is, I believe, peculiar to himself.

The old Duke del I—— (on the authority of whose lady I give you the anecdote) was once, with other grandees, in attendance on the King, when his Majesty, being in high gossiping humour, entered into a somewhat gay conversation on the fair sex. He descanted, at some length, on fickleness and caprice, and laughed at the dangers of husbands in these southern climates. Having had his fill of merriment on the subject of jealousy, he concluded with an air of triumph—" We, *crowned heads*, however, have this chief advantage above others, that our honour, as they call it, is safe; for suppose that queens were as much bent on mischief as some of their sex, where could they find kings and emperors to flirt with? Eh?"

LETTER XI.

Madrid, —— 1807.

In giving you a sketch of private life at Madrid, I shall begin by a character quite peculiar to the country, and well known all over Spain by the name of *Pretendientes*, or place-hunters. Very different ideas, however, are attached to these denominations in the two languages. Young men of the proudest families are regularly sent to Court on that errand, and few gentlemen destine their sons either for the church or the law, without calculating the means of supporting them three or four years at Madrid, as regular and professed *place-hunters*. The fact is, that, with the exception of three stalls in every cathedral, and in some collegiate churches, that are obtained by literary competition, there is not a single place of rank and emolument to which Court interest is not the exclusive road. Hence the necessity for all who do not possess an independent fortune, in other words, for more than two thirds of the Spanish gentry, to repair to the capital, there to procure

that interest, by whatever means their circumstances may afford.

The *Pretendientes* may be divided into four classes. Clergymen, who aspire to any preferment not inferior to a prebend; lawyers, who wish to obtain a place on the bench of judges in one of our numerous courts, both of Spain and Spanish America; men of business, who desire to be employed in the collection of the revenue; and *advocates*, whose views do not extend beyond a *Corregimiento*—a kind of *Recordership*, with very limited judicial powers, which exists in every town of any note where there is not an *Audiencia*, or superior tribunal. I shall dispatch the last two classes in a few words.

Between our advocates or barristers, and the superior judges, called *Oidores*, there is such a line of distinction as to be almost an insuperable barrier. A young man, who, having studied Roman law at the University, attends three or four years at an acting advocate's chambers, is, after an examination on Spanish law, qualified to plead at the courts of justice. But once engaged in this branch of the law, he must give up all hopes of rising above that doubtful rank which his profession gives him in society. Success may make him rich, but he must be contented with drudging for life at the bar of a provincial court, and bear the slighting and insolent tone with which the judges consider themselves at liberty to treat the advocates. It is, therefore, not

uncommon among young lawyers, who cannot command interest enough to be placed on the bench, to offer themselves as candidates for a *Corregimiento*. Having scraped together a little money, and procured a few letters of recommendation, they repair to Madrid, where they are seen almost daily in the minister's waiting-room with a petition, and a printed list of their university degrees and literary qualifications, called *Papél de Méritos*, which, after two or three hours attendance, they think themselves happy if his excellency will take from their hands. Such as can obtain an introduction to some of the grandees who have the right to appoint magistrates on their estates, confine themselves to the easier, though rather more humiliating task, of *toad-eating* to their patron.

The *Pretendientes* for the higher branches of finance, must be able to make a more decent appearance at Court, if they hope for success. It is not, however, the minister for that department, who is most to be courted in order to obtain these lucrative places. A recommendation from the Queen, or from the Prince of the Peace, generally interferes with his views, if he allows himself to have any of his own. To obtain the first, a handsome figure, or some pleasing accomplishment, such as singing to the guitar in the Spanish style, are the most likely means, either by engaging her Majesty's attention, or the affections of some of her favourite maids of honour. The no less powerful

recommendation of the Prince of the Peace is, I must say in justice to him, not always made the reward of flattery, or of more degrading servility. Justice and a due regard for merit, are, it is true, far from regulating the distribution of his patronage: yet, very different from the ministers who tremble before him, he can be approached by every individual in the kingdom, without an introduction, and in the certainty of receiving a civil, if not a favourable answer. His great failing, however, being the love of pleasure, none are so sure of a gracious reception as those who appear at his public levees, attended by a handsome wife or blooming daughter. The fact is so well known all over the country, and —I blush to say it—the national character is so far sinking under the influence of this profligate government, that beauties flock from every province for the chance of being noticed by the favourite. His public levee presents every week a collection of the handsomest women in the country, attended by their fathers or husbands. A suit thus supported is never known to fail.

The young aspirants to a *toga*, or judge's gown, often succeed through some indirect influence of this kind. The strange notion that an *advocate*—one that has pleaded causes at the bar—has, in a manner, disqualified himself for the bench, leaves the administration of justice open to inexperienced young men, who, having taken a degree in Roman law, and nominally attached themselves for a short

time to an *advocate*, as practioners, are suddenly raised to the important station of judges, either by marrying any of the Queen's maids of honour, or some more humble beauty on whom the Prince of the Peace has cast a transient gleam of favour. I have known such a reward extended to the sister of a temporary favourite, who, being poor, and in love with a young man of family, poor himself, and hopeless of otherwise obtaining a place, enabled him to marry, by bringing a judge's gown for her portion. Yet so perfectly can circumstances alter the connexion which some moral feelings have between themselves under certain forms and modifications of society, that the man I allude to, as having owed his promotion to such objectionable influence, is an example of justice and impartiality in the difficult station in which he has been placed. I do not mean, however, that a person who degrades his character with a view to promotion, gives a fair promise of honourable principles when called to discharge the duties of a public office: the growing venality of our judges is too sad and clear a proof of the reverse. But when a Government becomes so perfectly abandoned as to block up with filth and pollution every avenue to wealth, power, and even bare subsistence, men who, in a happier country, would have looked upon the contaminated path with abhorrence, or, had they ventured a single step upon it, would have been confirmed in their degradation by the indelible brand of public censure;

are seen to yield for a moment to the combined influence of want and example, and recover themselves so far, as almost to deserve the thanks of the people for having snatched a portion of authority from the grasp of the absolutely worthless.

Before I proceed to the remaining class of *Pretendientes*, allow me, as a relief from the contemplation of this scene of vice and corruption, to acquaint you with a man in power who, unwarped by any undue influence, has uniformly employed his patronage in the encouragement of modest and retiring merit. His name is Don Manuel Sixto Espinosa. His father was a musician, who having had the good fortune to please the King by his tasteful performances on the piano, was appointed teacher of that instrument to the Royal Family. His son, a young man of great natural abilities, which he had applied to the study of finance and political economy, (branches of knowledge little attended to in Spain,) had been gradually raised to a place of considerable influence in that department, when his well-known talents made the Prince of the Peace fix upon him as the fittest man to direct the establishment for the consolidation of the public debt. Espinosa, as Director of the Sinking Fund, has been accused of impiety by the clergy, for trespassing on their overgrown privileges; and blamed, by such as allow themselves to canvass state matters in whispers, for not opposing the misapplication of the funds he enables Govern-

ment to collect. It would be needless to answer the first charge. As to the second, common candour will allow that it is unfair to confound the duties of a collector with those of a trustee of the national revenue.

Without, however, entering upon the only remaining question, whether, in the unfortunate circumstances of this country, it is an honest man's duty to refuse his services to a Government whose object is to fleece the subject in order to pamper its own vices—a doctrine doubtful in theory, and almost inapplicable in practice,—Espinosa has qualities acknowledged by all who know him, and even undenied by his enemies, which, without raising him into an heroic model of public virtue, make him a striking instance of the power of virtuous and honourable principle, in the midst of every allurement and temptation which profligacy, armed with supreme power, can employ. Inaccessible to influence, his patronage has uniformly been extended to men of undoubted merit. A manuscript Essay on Political Economy, written by a friendless young man and presented to Espinosa, was enough to obtain the author a valuable appointment. A decided enemy to the custom of receiving presents, so prevalent in Spain, as to have become a matter of course in every suit, either for justice or favour; I positively know, that when a commercial transaction, to the amount of millions, between this Government and a mercantile house in London

had received his approbation, Espinosa sent back a hamper of wine, which one of the partners had hoped, from its trifling value, he would have received as a token of gratitude. His private conduct is exemplary, and his manners perfectly free from "the insolence of office," which he might assume from the high honours to which he has been raised. His parents, now very old, and living in the modest, unassuming style which becomes their original rank, are visited by Espinosa every Sunday, (the only day which leaves him a moment of rest) and treated with the utmost kindness and deference. Always mild and modest in his deportment, it is on these occasions that he seems quite to forget his honours, and carry himself back to the time when he looked for love and protection from those two, now, helpless beings. It is there, and only there, that I once met Espinosa, and he has ever since possessed my respect. If I have dwelt too long on the subject of a man perfectly unknown to you, I trust you will not attribute it to any of the motives which generally prompt the praises of men in power. These, indeed, can never reach the ear of him they commend, nor has he the means to serve the eulogist. But the daily sickening sight of this infamous Court makes the mind cling to the few objects which still bear the impress of virtue: and having to proceed with the disgusting picture in which I have engaged, I gladly seized the opportunity of dispelling the impression which my subject might

leave, either that I take pleasure in vilifying my country, or that every seed of honour has died away from the land.

I do not know how it happens that in going through the description of the different classes of *Pretendientes*, I have inverted the order which they hold in my enumeration, so that I still find myself with the Reverend *Stall-hunters* upon my hands. These, as you may suppose, are, by the decencies of their profession, compelled to take quite a different course from those already described; for Hymen, in this country, expects nothing from the clergy but disturbance; and Love, accustomed, at Court, to the glitter of lace and embroidery, is, usually, frightened at the approach of their black cloaks, and the flapping brims of their enormous hats.

During the last reign, and the early part of the present, the King seldom disposed of his patronage without the advice of his Privy Council. The *Camaristas de Castilla* received the petitions of the candidates, accompanied by documental proofs of their merits and qualifications, and reported thereon to the King through the Minister of the home department. Such was the established practice till the Queen took to herself the patronage of the Crown, and finally shared it with her favourite. The houses of the Privy Counsellors were, accordingly, the great resort of the Clerical *Pretendientes*. Letters of introduction to some of the *Camaristas*

were considered the most indispensable provision for the Madrid journey; and no West Indian slave was ever so dependent on the nod of his master, as these parasites were on the humours of the whole family of the Privy Counsellor, where each had the happiness to be received as a constant visiter. There he might be seen in the morning relieving the *ennui* of the lady of the house; who, from the late period of life at which judges are promoted to a place in the King's Council, are themselves of the age which we call *canonical*; and there he was sure to be found in the evening making one at the game of *Mediatór*, without which her ladyship would be more restless and unhappy than if she had missed her supper. In this Egyptian bondage the clerical aspirant would pass three or four years of his life, till his patron was willing and able to obtain for him the first place in the list of three candidates presented to the King at each vacancy, when the happy man quitted the Court for some cathedral, there quietly to enjoy the fruits of his patience and perseverance.

The road to preferment is, at present, more intricate and uncertain. I know a few who have been promoted in consequence of having assisted the Government with their pens. Such is the case of a clergyman, whose work against the privileges of the province of Biscay was the prelude to the repeal of its ancient charters under the Prince of the Peace: such is that of a learned sycophant who has lately given us a National Cathechism, in imitation

of one published by Napoleon after his accession to the throne of France, setting forth the divine right of Kings, and the duty of passive obedience. But the despotism which crushes us, is too pampered and overgrown to require the assistance of pensioned scribblers. There was a period when the Prince of the Peace was pleased to see his name in verse; but crowds of sonnetteers showered so profusely their praises upon him, that he has grown insensible to the voice of the Muses. He, now and then, rewards some of his clerical courtiers, with a recommendation to the minister, which amounts to a positive order; but seems rather shy of meddling with such paltry concerns. It is the Queen who has, of late, taken possession of the keys of the church, which she commits into the hands of her first lady of the bed-chamber, allowing her to levy a toll on such as apply for admittance to the snug corners of the establishment. I do not report from hearsay. The son of a very respectable Seville tradesman, whom I have known all my life, having taken orders, became acquainted with a person thoroughly conversant with the state of the Court, who put him in possession of the secret springs which might promote him at once to a prebendal stall in the cathedral of his own town. The young man had no qualifications but a handsome person, and a pretty long purse, of which, however, his father had still the strings in his own hands. Four thousand dollars, or two years income of the prebend, was the market-price then fixed

fixed by the lady of the bedchamber; and though the good dull man, the father, was not unwilling to lay out the money so evidently to the advantage of his son, he had heard something about simony, —a word which, together with his natural reluctance to part with his bullion, gave him such qualms of conscience as threatened to quash the young man's hopes. The latter possessed but a very scanty stock of learning, but was not easily driven to his wit's end; and, knowing too well the versatile nature of casuistry, proposed a consultation of three reverend divines, in order to take their opinion as to the lawfulness of the transaction. The point being duly debated, it appeared that, since the essence of simony is the purchase of spiritual things for money, and the interest of the Queen's confidant was perfectly wordly and temporal, it might conscientiously be bought for the sum at which she valued it. The young man, furnished with his gold credentials, was a short time ago properly introduced to the Queen's female favourite. Having attended her evening parties for a short time, he has, without farther trouble, been presented to the vacant stall at Seville.

The hardships of a *Pretendiente's* life, especially such as do not centre their views in the church, have often furnished the theatre with amusing scenes. The Spanish proverbial imprecation—"May you be dragged about as a *Pretendiente*," cannot be felt in its full force but by such as, like myself, have lived on

terms of intimacy with some of that unfortunate race. A scanty supply of money from their families is the only fund on which a young man, in pursuit of a judge's gown, must draw for subsistence, for three or four journeys a year to the *Sitios*, in order to attend the Court; for the court-dress which he is obliged to wear almost daily; and the turns of ill-luck at the card-table of his lady patroness. What a notion would an Englishman form of our degree of refinement, if he was to enter one of the lodging-houses at Aranjuez, for instance, and find a large paved court surrounded by apartments, each filled by a different set of lodgers, with three or four wretched beds, and not so many chairs for all furniture; here one of the party blacking his shoes; there another darning his stockings; a third brushing the court-dress he is to wear at the minister's levee; while a fourth lies still in bed, resting, as well as he can, from the last night's ball! As hackney coaches are not known either at Madrid or the Sitios, there is something both pitiable and ludicrous in the appearance of these judges, intendants, and governors in embryo, sallying forth in full dress, after their laborious toilet, to pick their way through the mud, often casting an anxious look on the lacefrills and ruffles which, artfully attached to the sleeves and waistcoat, might by some untoward accident, betray the coarse and discoloured shirt which they meant to conceal. Thus they trudge to the palace, to walk up and down the galleries for hours, till they

have succeeded in making a bow to the minister, or any other great personage, on whom their hopes depend. Having performed this important piece of duty, they retire to a very scanty dinner, unless their good stars should put them in the way of an invitation. In the afternoon they must make their appearance in the public walk, where the royal family take a daily airing; after which, the day is closed by the attendance at the *Tertulia* of some great lady, if they be fortunate enough to have obtained her leave to pay her this daily tribute of respect.

Such as visit Madrid and the *Sitios*, independent of Court favour, may, for a few weeks, find amusement in the strangeness of the scene. The Court of Spain is, otherwise, too dull, stiff, and formal, to become an interesting residence. The only good society in the upper ranks is to be found among the *Corps Diplomatique*. The King, wholly occupied in the chase, and the Queen in her *boudoir*, are, of late, extremely averse to the theatres. Two Spanish play-houses are still allowed to be open every night; but the opera has been discontinued for several years, merely because it was a daily *rendezvous* for the higher classes. So jealous is the Queen of fashionable assemblies, that the grandees do not venture to admit more than four or five individuals to their *tertulias;* and scarcely a ball is given at Madrid in the course of the year. This, however, is never attempted without asking the

Queen's permission. The Marchioness of Santiago, whose evening parties were numerous, and attended by the most agreeable and accomplished people in the capital, was, a short time since, obliged, by an intimation communicated through the police, to deny her house to her friends.

Even bull-fights have been forbidden, and the idle population of the metropolis of Spain have been left no other source of amusement than collecting every evening in the extensive walk called El Prado, after having lounged away the morning about the streets, or basked in the sun, during the winter, at the Puerta del Sol, a large space, almost surrounded by public buildings. The coffee-rooms are, in the cold season, crowded for about an hour after dinner, *i. e.* from three to four in the afternoon, and in the early part of the evening; but the noise, and the smoke of the cigars, make these places as close and disagreeable as any tap-room in London. It would be absurd to expect any kind of rational conversation in such places. The most interesting topics must be carefully avoided, for fear of the combined powers of the police and the Inquisition, whose spies are dreaded in all public places. Hence the depraved taste which degrades our intercourse to an eternal giggling and bantering.

Our daily resource for society is the house of Don Manuel Josef Quintana, a young lawyer, whose poetical talents, select reading, and various information, place him among the first of our men

of letters; while the kindness of his heart, and the lofty and honourable principles of his conduct, make him an invaluable friend and most agreeable companion. After our evening walk in the Prado, we retire to that gentleman's study, where four or five others, of similar taste and opinions, meet to converse with freedom upon whatever subjects are started. The political principles of Quintana and his best friends consist in a rooted hatred of the existing tyranny, and a great dislike of the prevailing influence of the French Emperer over the Spanish Court.

It was in this knot of literary friends that an attempt to establish a Monthly Magazine originated, a short time before my arrival at Madrid. But such is the listlessness of the country on every thing relating to literature, such the trammels in which the *Censors* confine the invention of the writers, that the publication of the *Miscelanea* was given up in a few months. Few, besides, as our men of taste are in number, they have split into two parties, who pursue each other with the weapons of satire and ridicule.

Moratin, the first of our comic writers—a man whose genius, were he free from the prejudices of strict adherence to the *Unities*, and extreme servility to the Aristotelic rules of the drama, might have raised our theatre to a decided superiority over the rest of Europe, and who, notwithstanding the trammels in which he exerts his talents, has given us

six plays, which for the elegance, the liveliness, and the refined graces of the dialogue, as well as the variety, the truth, the interest, and comic power of the characters, do not yield, in my opinion, to the best modern pieces of the French, or the English stage—Moratin, I say, may be considered as the centre of one of the small literary parties of this capital, while Quintana is the leader of the other. Difference of opinion on literary subjects is not, however, the source of this division. Moratin and his friends have courted the favour of the Prince of the Peace, while Quintana has never addressed a line to the favourite. This tacit reproach, embittered, very probably, by others rather too explicit, dropped by the independent party, has kindled a spirit of enmity among the Court *literati*, which, besides producing a total separation, breaks out in satire and invective on the appearance of any composition from the pen of Quintana.

I have been insensibly led where I cannot avoid entering upon the subject of literature, though from the nature of these letters, as well as the limits to which I am forced to confine them, it was my intention to pass it over in silence. I shall not, however, give you any speculations on so extensive a topic, but content myself with making you acquainted with the names which form the scanty list of our living poets.

I have already mentioned Moratin and Quintana. I do not know that the former has published any

thing besides his plays, or that he has, as yet, given a collection of them to the public. I conceive that some fears of the Inquisitorial censures are the cause of this delay. There has, indeed, been a time when his play, *La Mogigata*, or Female Devotee, was scarcely allowed to be acted, it being believed that, but for the patronage of the Prince of the Peace, it would long before have been placed in the list of forbidden works.

Quintana has published a small collection of short poems, which deservedly classes him among those Spaniards who are just allowed to give a specimen of their powers, and shew us the waste of talents for which our oppressive system of government is answerable to civilized Europe. He has embellished the title-page of his book with an emblematical vignette, where a winged human figure is seen chained to the threshold of a gloomy Gothic structure, looking up to the Temple of the Muses in the attitude of resigned despondency. I should not have mentioned this trifling circumstance, were it not a fresh proof of the pervading feeling under which every aspiring mind among us is doomed hopelessly to linger.

It is not, however, the Gothic structure of our national system alone which confines the poetic genius of Spain. There is (if I may venture some vague conjectures upon a difficult and not yet fairly tried subject) a want of flexibility in the Spanish language, arising from the great length of most

of its words, the little variety of its terminations, and the bulkiness of its adverbs, which must for ever, I fear, clog its verse. The sound of our best poetry is grand and majestic indeed; but it requires an uncommon skill to subdue and modify that sound, so as to relieve the ear and satisfy the mind. Since the introduction of the Italian measures by Boscan and Garcilaso, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, our best poets have been servile imitators of Petrarch, and the writers of that school. Every Spanish poet has, like the knight of La Mancha, thought it his bounden duty to be desperately in love, deriving both his subject and his inspiration from a minute dissection of his lady. The language, in the mean time, condemned for centuries, from the unexampled slavery of our press, to be employed almost exclusively in the daily and familiar intercourse of life, has had its richest ornaments tarnished and soiled, by the powerful influence of mental association. Scarcely one third of its copious dictionary can be used in dignified prose, while a very scanty list of words composes the whole stock which poetry can use without producing either a sense of disgust or ridicule. In spite of these fetters, Quintana's poetical compositions convey much deep thought and real feeling; and should an unexpected revolution in politics allow his mind that freedom, without which the most vigorous shoots of genius soon sicken and perish, his powerful numbers might well inspire his country-

men with that ardent and disinterested love of liberty which adds dignity to the amiableness of his character.

The poet who has obtained most popularity in our days is Melendez, a lawyer, who, having for some time been a professor of polite literature at Salamanca, was raised by the Prince of the Peace to a place in the Council of Castile, and, not long after, rusticated to his former residence, where he remains to this day. Melendez is a man of great natural talents, improved by more reading and information than is commonly found among our men of taste. His popularity as a poet, however, was at first raised on the very slight and doubtful foundation of a collection of Anacreontics, and a few love-poems, possessing little more merit than an harmonious language, and a certain elegant simplicity. Melendez, in his youth, was deeply infected with the mawkish sensibility of the school of Gessner; and had he not by degrees aimed at nobler subjects than his *Dove*, and his *Phyllis*, a slender progress in the national taste of Spain would have been sufficient to consign his early poems to the toilettes of our town shepherdesses. He has, however, in his maturer age, added a collection of odes to his pastorals, where he shows himself a great master of Spanish verse, though still deficient in boldness and originality. That he ranks little above the degree of a sweet versifier, is more to be attributed to that want of freedom which clips the wings of thought in

every Spaniard, than to the absence of real genius. It is reported that Melendez is employed in a translation of Virgil: should he live to complete it, I have no doubt it will do honour to our country.

During the attempt to awaken the Spanish Muse, which has been made for the last fifty years, none has struck out a fairer path towards her emancipation from the affected, stiff, and cumbrous style in which she was dressed by our Petrarchists of the sixteenth century than a naval officer named Arriaza. If his admirable command of language, and liveliness of fancy, were supported by any depth of thought, acquired knowledge, or the least degree of real feeling; the Spaniards would have an original poet to boast of.

Few as the names of note are in the poetical department, I fear I must be completely silent in regard to the branch of eloquence. Years pass with us without the publication of any original work. A few translations from the French, with now and then a sermon, is all the Madrid Gazette can muster to fill up its page of advertisements. A compilation, entitled El Viagero Universal, and the translation of Guthrie's Grammar of Geography, are looked upon as efforts both of literary industry and commercial enterprise.

There exist two Royal Academies—one for the improvement of the Spanish Language, the other for the advancement of National History. We owe to the former an ill-digested dictionary, with a very bad grammar; and to the latter some valuable dis-

courses, and an incomplete geographical and historical dictionary. Had the *Spanish Academy* continued their early labours, and called in the aid of real talent, instead of filling up the list of members with titled names, which have made it ridiculous; their Dictionary might, without great difficulty, have been improved into a splendid display of one of the richest among modern languages; and the philosophical spirit of the age would have been applied to the elucidation of its elements. That Academy has published a volume of prize essays and poems, the fruits of a very feeble competition, in which the poetry partakes largely of the servility of imitation to which I have already alluded, and the prose is generally stiff and affected. Our style, in fact, is, at present, quite unsettled — fluctuating between the wordy pomposity of our old writers, without their ease, and the epigrammatic conciseness of second-rate French writers, stripped of their sprightliness and graces. As long, however, as we are condemned to the dead silence in which the nation has been kept for centuries, there is little chance of fixing any standard of taste for Spanish eloquence. Capmany, probably our best living philologist and prose writer, insists upon our borrowing every word and phrase from the authors of the sixteenth century, the golden age (as it is called) of our literature; while the Madrid translators seem determined to make the Spanish language a dialect of the French—a sort of *Patois*, unintelligible to either nation. The true path certainly lies between

both. The greatest part of our language has been allowed to become vulgar or obsolete. The languages which, during the mental progress of Europe, have been made the vehicles and instruments of thought, have left ours far behind in the powers of abstraction and precision; and the rich treasure which has been allowed to lie buried so long, must be re-coined and burnished, before it can be recognised for sterling currency. It is neither by rejecting as foreign whatever expressions cannot be found in the writers under the Austrian dynasty, nor by disfiguring our idiom with Gallicisms, that we can expect to shape it to our present wants and fashions. Our aim should be to think for ourselves in our own language—to *think*, I say, and express our thoughts with clearness, force, and precision; not to imitate the mere sound of the empty periods which generally swell the pages of the old Spanish writers.

I do not mean, however, to pester you with a dissertation. Wretched as is the present state of Spanish literature, it would require a distinct series of letters to trace the causes of its decay, to relate the vicissitudes it has suffered, and to weigh the comparative merits of such as, under the deadening influence of the most absolute despotism, are still endeavouring to feed the smouldering fire, which, but for their efforts, would have long since been extinguished.

You will, I trust, excuse this short digression, in the sure hope that I shall resume the usual gossip in my next letter.

LETTER XII.

Seville, July 25, 1808.

Acquainted as you must be with the events which, for these last two months, have fixed the eyes of Europe on this country, it can give you little surprise to find me dating again from my native town. I have arrived just in time to witness the unbounded joy which the defeat of Dupont's army, at Baylen, has diffused over this town. The air resounds with acclamations, and the deafening clangour of the Cathedral bells, announces the arrival of the victorious General Castaños, who, more surprised at the triumph of his arms than any one of his countrymen, is just arrived to give thanks to the body of Saint Ferdinand, and to repose a few days under his laurels.

There is something very melancholy in the wild enthusiasm, the overweening confidence, and mad boasting which prevail in this town. Lulled into a security which threatens instant death to any who should dare disturb it with a word of caution, both the *Junta* and the people look on the present war

as ended by this single blow; and while they spend, in processions and Te-Deums, the favourable moments when they might advance on Madrid, their want of foresight, and utter ignorance of the means of retaliation possessed by the enemy, induce them loudly to call for the infraction of the capitulation which has placed a French army in their power. The troops, which the articles agreed upon entitle to a conveyance to their own country, are, by the effect of popular clamour, to be confined in hulks, in the Bay of Cadiz.' General Dupont is the only individual who, besides being treated with a degree of courtesy and respect, which, were it not for the rumours afloat, would bring destruction upon the Junta; has been promised a safe retreat into France. He is now handsomely lodged in a Dominican convent, and attended by a numerous guard of honour. The morning after his private arrival, the people began to assemble in crowds, and consequences fatal to the General were dreaded. Several members of the Junta, who were early to pay the general their respects, and chiefly one Padre Gil,* a wild, half-learned monk, whose influence over the Sevillian mob is unbounded; came forward, desiring the multitude to disperse. Whether truth and the urgency of the case forced out a secret, known only to the Junta; or whether it was an artifice of the orator, who, among his eccentricities and moun-

* See Letter X. p. 309.

tebank tricks, must be allowed the praise of boldness in openly condemning the murders of which the mob has been guilty ; he asserted in his speech, that "Spain was more indebted to Dupont than the people were aware of." These words, uttered with a strong and mysterious emphasis, had the desired effect, and the French general has now only to dread the treatment which may await him in France, in consequence of his defeat and surrender.

Having made you acquainted with the only circumstances in the last most important event, which the public accounts are not likely to mention, I shall have done with news—a subject to which I feel an unconquerable aversion—and begin my account of the limited field of observation in which my own movements, since the first approach of the present troubles, have placed me.

The first visible symptom of impending convulsions was the arrest of Ferdinand, then Prince of Asturias, by order of his father. My inseparable companion, Leandro, had been for some time acquainted with a favourite of the Prince of the Peace, who, being like my friend, addicted to music, had often asked us to his amateur parties. On the second of last November we were surprised by a letter from that gentleman, requesting my friend to proceed to the Escurial without delay, on business of great importance. As we walked to the Puerta del Sol, to procure a one-horse chaise, called *Caleza*, the news of the Prince's arrest was whispered to us,

by an acquaintance, whom we met at that winter resort of all the Madrid loungers. We consulted for a few minutes on the expediency of venturing near the Lion's den, when his Majesty was so perfectly out of all temper; but curiosity and a certain love of adventure prevailed, and we set off at a round trot for the Escurial.

The village adjacent to the building bearing that name, is one of the meanest in that part of Castille. Houses for the accommodation of the King's suite have been erected at a short distance from the monastic palace, which the royal family divide with the numerous community of Hieronymites, to whom Philip II. assigned one wing of that magnificent structure. But such as, following the Court on business, are obliged to take lodgings in the neighbourhood, must be contented with the most wretched hovels. In one of these we found our friend, Colonel A., who, though military tutor to the youngest of the King's sons, might well have exchanged his room and furniture for such as are found in England at the most miserable pot-house. My intimacy with Leandro was accepted as an excuse for my intrusion, and we were each accommodated with a truckle-bed, quickly set up in the two opposite corners of the Colonel's sitting-room. The object of the summons which had occasioned our journey, was not long kept a secret. The clergyman who superintended the classical studies of the Infante Don Francisco de Paula, was suspected of

having assisted the Prince of Asturias in the secret application to Buonaparte, which had produced the present breach in the royal family. Should the proofs of his innocence, which the tutor had presented to the King and Queen, fail to re-establish him in their good opinion, my friend would be proposed as a successor, and enter without delay upon the duties of the office. The whole business was to be decided in the course of the next day. The present being the commemoration of the Departed, or All-Souls' Day, we wished to visit the church during the evening service. On taking leave of the Colonel, he cautioned us not to approach that part of the building where the Prince was confined under a guard, to his own apartments.

Though this was our first visit to the Escurial, the disclosure which had just been made to my friend, was of too important a nature to leave us in a fit mood to enjoy the solemn grandeur of the structure to which we were directing our steps, and the rude magnificence of the surrounding scene. To be placed near one of the members of the royal family, when that family had split into two irreconcileable parties, and to be reckoned among the enemies of the heir apparent, was, at once, to plunge headlong into the most dangerous vortex of Court intrigue which had yet threatened to overwhelm the country. To decline the offer, when the condidate's name had in all probability received the sanction of the Prince of the Peace, was to incur

suspicion from those who had arbitrary power in their hands. In this awkward dilemma, our most flattering prospect was the acquittal of the tutor, an event by no means improbable, considering the well-known dulness of that grave personage, and the hints of the approaching release of the Prince, which we had gathered from the Colonel. We therefore proposed to divert our thoughts from the subject of our fears by contemplating the objects before us.

The Escurial inclòses within the circuit of its massive and lofty walls, the King's palace, the monastery, with a magnificent church, and the Pantheon, or subterranean vault of beautiful marble, surrounded with splendid sarcophagi, for the remains of the Spanish Kings and their families. It stands near the top of a rugged mountain, in the chain which separates Old from New Castille, and by the side of an enormous mass of rock, which supplied the architect with materials. It was the facility of quarrying the stone where it was to be employed, that made the gloomy tyrant, Philip II., mark out this wild spot in preference to others, equally sequestered and less exposed to the fury of the winds, which blow here with incredible violence. To have an adequate shelter from the blast, an ample passage, well aired and lighted, was contrived by the architect from the palace to the village.

The sullen aspect of the building; the bleak and

rude mountain top, near which it stands more in rivalry than contrast; the wild and extensive glen opening below, covered with woods of rugged, shapeless, stunted ilex, surrounded by brushwood; the solitude and silence which the evening twilight bestowed on the whole scenery, increased to the fancy by the shy and retiring manners of a scanty population, trained under the alternate awe of the Court, and their own immediate lords, the monks, —all this, heightened by the breathless expectation which the imprisonment of the heir apparent had created, and the cautious looks of the few attendants who had followed the royal family on this occasion; impressed us with a vague feeling of insecurity, which it would be dfficult to express or analyze. No one except ourselves and the monks, perambulating the aisles with lighted tapers in their hands, in order to chant dirges to the memory of the founder and benefactors, was to be seen within the precincts of the temple. The vaults re-echoed our very steps when the chorus of deep voices had yielded to the trembling accents of the old priest who presided at the ceremony. To skulk in the dark, might have excited suspicion, and to come within the glare of the monks' tapers, was the sure means of raising their unbounded curiosity. We soon therefore glided into the cloisters next to the church. But, not being well acquainted with the locality of the immense and intricate labyrinth which the monastery presents to a stranger, the fear

of getting upon forbidden ground, or of being locked up for the night, induced us to retire to our lodgings.

With the approbation of our host, we ventured the next morning to apply to the monk, who acts, by appointment, as the *Cicerone* of the monastery, for a view of the chief curiosities it contains. He allowed us a walk in the magnificent and valuable library, which is said to be one of the richest European treasures of ancient manuscripts—a treasure, indeed, which, admidst those mountains, and under the control of an illiberal government and a set of ignorant, lazy monks, may be said to be hid in the earth. The collection of first-rate pictures at the Escurial is immense; and the walls may be said to be covered with them. One has only to lounge about the numerous cloisters of the Monastery, to satiate the most craving appetite for the beauties of art. Our guide, however, who took no pleasure in going over the same ground for the ten-thousandth time, hurried us to the collection of relics, in which he seemed to take a never failing delight. I will not give you the list of these spiritual treasures. It fills up a large board from three to four feet in length, and of a proportionate breadth, at the entrance of the choir. Yet I cannot omit that we were shewn the body of one of the innocents massacred by Herod, and some coagulated milk of the Virgin Mary. The monk cast upon us his dark, penetrating eyes, as he exhibited these two most

curious objects;—but the air of the Escurial has a peculiar power to lengthen and fix the muscles of the face. There is, in the same room which contains the relics, a curious box of a black shining wood, probably ebony, the whole lid of which is covered, on the inside, with the wards of a most complicated lock. It is said to have contained the secret correspondence of the unfortunate Don Carlos, which his unnatural father, Philip II., made the pretext for his imprisonment, and probably for the violent death which is supposed to have ended his misery.

On returning from the inspection of the Monastery, our suspense was relieved by the welcome intelligence that the Infante's tutor had been fully acquitted. The Prince of Asturias, we were told also, had mentioned to the King the names of his advisers, and was now released from confinement. My friend was too conscious of the danger which, in the shape of promotion, had hung over his head for some hours, not to rejoice in what many would call his disappointment. He had probably dallied some moments with ambition; but, if so, he was fortunate enough to perceive that she had drawn him to the brink of a precipice.

The Prince of the Peace had, against his custom, remained at Madrid during the Escurial season, that he might escape the imputation of promoting the unhappy divisions of the royal family. Something was rumoured at Madrid of a dismemberment

of Portugal intended by Bonaparte, in consequence of which Godoy was to obtain an independent sovereignty. This report, originally whispered about by the friends of the latter, was completely hushed up in a few days; while, instead of the buoyancy of spirits which the prospect of a crown was likely to produce in the favourite, care and anxiety were observed to lurk in all his words and motions. He continued, however, holding his weekly levees; and as the French troops were pouring into the Spanish territory, endeavoured to conceal his alarm by an air of directing their movements. When, however, the French had taken almost violent possession of some of our fortresses, and were seen advancing to Madrid with Murat at their head, there was no farther room for dissimulation. Though I had no object at Godoy's levees but the amusement of seeing a splendid assembly, open to every male or female who appeared in a decent dress; that idle curiosity happened to take me to the last he held at Madrid. He appeared, as usual, at the farthest end of a long saloon or gallery, surrounded by a numerous suite of officers, and advanced slowly between the company, who had made a way for him in the middle. Such as wished to speak to him took care to stand in front, while those who, like myself, were content to pay for their admission with a bow, kept purposely behind. Godoy stood now before the group, of which I

formed one of the least visible figures, and bowing affably, as was his manner, said, in a loud voice, "Gentlemen, the French advance fast upon us; we must be upon our guard, for there is abundance of bad faith on their side." It was now evident that Napoleon had cast off the mask under which he was hitherto acting; and such as heard this speech had no doubt that the arrival of Izquierdo, Godoy's confidential agent at Paris, had at once undeceived him; filling him with shame and vexation at the gross artifice to which he had been a dupe.

This happened about the beginning of March. The Court had proceeded to their spring residence of Aranjuez, and the Prince of the Peace joined the royal family soon after. A visible gloom had, by this time, overcast Madrid, arising chiefly from a rumour, that it was intended by the King and Queen to follow the example of the Portuguese family, and make their escape to Mexico. Few among the better classes were disposed, from love or loyalty, to oppose such a determination. But Madrid and the royal *Sitios* would sink into insignificance, were the Court to be removed to a distance. The dissolution of the most wretched Government always fills its dependents with consternation; and the pampered guards with which the pride of Spanish royalty had surrounded the throne, could not endure to be levelled, by the absence of the sovereign, with the rest of the army. The

plan, therefore, of a flight out of Spain, with the ocean at the distance of four hundred miles, was perfectly absurd and impracticable.

The departure of the royal family had, with all possible secrecy, been fixed for the 19th of March. Measures, however, were taken by Ferdinand's friends, on the first appearance of preparations for the journey, to defeat the intentions of the King, the Queen, and the favourite. Numbers of the peasantry were sent to Aranjuez from villages at a considerable distance; and the Spanish foot-guards, the Walloons, and the horse-guards engaged to support the people. Soon after midnight, before the 19th, a furious attack was made by the populace on the house of the Prince of the Peace, who, leaping out of his bed, had scarcely time to escape the knives which were struck, in frenzied disappointment, where the warmth of the sheets clearly shewed how recently he had left them. As the doors were carefully guarded, no doubt remained of his being still in the house; and after the slight search which could be made by artificial light, it was determined to guard all the outlets till the approaching day.

The alarm soon spread to the royal palace, where the Prince's friends, among whom policy had ranged at this critical moment, the ministers who owed most to Godoy; hailed, in the King's terror, and the Queen's anxiety to save the life of her lover, the fairest opening for placing Ferdinand on the throne. Day-light had enabled the ringleaders to begin the

most active search after the Prince of the Peace; and the certainty of his presence on the spot rendered his destruction inevitable. It does honour, indeed, to the affectionate and humane character of Charles, whatever we may think of his other qualities, that he resigned the crown from eagerness to rescue his faithless friend. The King's abdication was published to the multitude, with whom the guards had taken an open and decided part, and Ferdinand appeared on horseback to fulfil the engagement he had made to his parents of protecting the favourite from the assassins. The unfortunate man, after a confinement of more than twelve hours, in a recess over the attics of his house, where he had lurked, with scarcely any clothing, and in absolute want of food and drink, was, if I may credit report, compelled by thirst to beg the assistance of a servant who betrayed him to his pursuers. What saved him from falling on the spot, a victim to the fierceness of his enemies—whether the desire of the leaders to inflict upon him a public and ignominious death, or some better feelings, of such as, at this fearful moment, surrounded his person—I am not able to tell. Nor would I deprive the new King of whatever claim to genuine humanity his conduct on this occasion may have given him. I can only state the fact that, under his escort Godoy was carried a prisoner to the Horse-guard Barracks, not, however, without receiving some severe wounds on the way, inflicted by such as

would not miss the honour of fleshing their knives on the man whom but a few hours before, they would not have ventured to look boldly in the face.

The news of the revolution at Aranjuez had spread through the capital by the evening of the 19th; and it was but too evident that a storm was gathering against the nearest relations of Godoy. Night had scarcely come on, when a furious mob invaded the house of Don Diego, the favourite's younger brother. The ample space which the magnificent Calle de Alcalá leaves at its opening into the Prado, of which that house forms a corner, afforded room not only for the operations of the rioters, but for a multitude of spectators, of whom I was one myself. The house having been broken into, and found deserted, the whole of the rich furniture it contained was thrown out at the windows. Next came down the very doors, and fixtures of all kinds, which, made into an enormous pile with tables, bedsteads, chests of drawers, and pianos, were soon in a blaze, that, but for the stillness of the evening, might have spread to the unoffending neighbourhood. Having enjoyed this splendid and costly bonfire, the mob ranged themselves in a kind of procession, bearing lint-torches, taken from the numerous chandlers-shops which are found at Madrid; and directed their steps to the house of the Prince Franciforte, Godoy's brother-in-law.

The magistrates, however, had by this time fixed

a board on the doors both of that and Godoy's own house, giving notice that the property both of the favourite and his near relations had been confiscated by the new King. This was sufficient to turn away the mob from the remaining objects of their fury; and without any farther mischief, they were contented with spending the whole night in the streets, bearing about lighted torches, and drinking at the expense of the wine-retailers, whose shops, like your pot-houses, are the common resort of the vulgar. The riot did not cease with the morning. Crowds of men and women paraded the streets the whole day, with cries of "Long live King Ferdinand!—Death to Godoy!" The whole garrison of Madrid were allured out of their barracks by bands of women bearing pitchers of wine in their hands; and a procession was seen about the streets in the afternoon, where the soldiers, mixed with the people, bore in their firelocks the palm-branches which, as a protection against lightning, are commonly hung at the windows. Yet, amidst this fearful disorder, no insult was offered to the many individuals of the higher classes, who ventured among the mob. Nothing, however, appears to me so creditable to the populace of Madrid, as their abstaining from pillage at the house of Diego Godoy—every article, however valuable, was faithfully committed to the flames.

Murat, with his army, was, during these events, at a short distance from Madrid. The plan of putting

the royal family to flight had been frustrated by the popular commotion at Aranjuez, and the unexpected accession of Ferdinand. But the new King, no less than his parents, hastening by professions of friendship to court the support of French power, Murat proceeded to the Spanish capital, there to pursue the course which might be most conducive to the views of his sovereign. I saw the entrance of the division which was to make the town their head-quarters. The rest occupied the environs, some in a camp within half a mile, and some in the neighbouring villages. The French entered as friends, and they cannot say that the inhabitants shewed, upon that occasion, the least symptoms of hostility. The prominent feeling which might be observed in the capital, was a most anxious expectation; but I know several instances of French soldiers relieved by the common people; and had Murat acknowledged Ferdinand VII., he with his troops would have been hailed and treated as brothers.

The French troops had been but a few days at Madrid, when Ferdinand left Aranjuez for his capital, where Murat inhabited the magnificent house of the Prince of the Peace, within a very short distance of the royal palace. From thence he encouraged the young King's hopes of a speedy recognition by the Emperor, excusing himself, at the same time, for taking no notice of Ferdinand's approach and presence, either by himself or his

troops. Without any other display but that of the most enthusiastic applause from the multitude, Ferdinand, on horseback, and attended by a few guards, appeared at the gate of Atocha. I had placed myself near the entrance, and had a full view of him, as, surrounded by the people on foot, he moved on slowly, up the beautiful walk called El Prado. Never did monarch meet with a more loyal and affectionate welcome from his subjects; yet, never did subjects behold a more vacant and unmeaning countenance, even among the long faces of the Spanish Bourbons. To features not at all prepossessing, either shyness or awkwardness had added a stiffness, which, but for the motion of the body, might induce a suspicion that we were wasting our greetings on a wax figure.

As if for the sake of contrast, Murat, whose handsome figure on horseback was shewn to the greatest advantage by a dress almost theatrical, appeared every Sunday morning in the Prado, surrounded by generals and aid-de-camps, no less splendidly accoutred, there to review the picked troops of his army. Numbers of people were drawn at first by the striking magnificence of this martial spectacle; but jealousy and distrust were fast succeeding to the suspense and doubt which the artful evasions of the French Prince had been able to keep up for a time.

The first burst of indignation against the French was caused by their interference in favour of the

Prince of the Peace. The people of Madrid were so eager for the public execution of Godoy, that when it was known that the man on whose hanging carcase they daily expected to feast their eyes, was proceeding out of the kingdom under a French escort; loud and fierce murmurs from all quarters of the town announced the bitter resentment of disappointed revenge. It was, nevertheless, still in the power of Napoleon to have kept the whole nation at his devotion, by making the long-expected recognition of Ferdinand. Even when, through the unworthy artifices which are already known to the world, Ferdinand had been decoyed to Bayonne, and the greatest anxiety prevailed at Madrid as to the result of the journey, I witnessed the joy of an immense multitude collected at the Puerta del Sol, late in the evening, when, probably with a view to disperse them, the report was spread that the courier we had seen arrive, brought the intelligence of Napoleon's acknowledgement of the young King, and his determination to adopt him by marriage into his own family. The truth, however, could not be concealed any longer; and the plan of usurpation, which was disclosed the next morning, produced the clearest indications of an inevitable catastrophe.

The wildest schemes for the destruction of the French division at Madrid were canvassed almost in public, and with very little reserve. Nothing indeed so completely betrays our present ignorance as to the power and efficiency of regular troops, as the

projects which were circulated in the capital for an attack on the French corps, which still paraded every Sunday morning in the *Prado*. Short pikes, headed with a sharp-cutting crescent, were expected to be distributed to the spectators, who used to range themselves behind the cavalry. At one signal the horses were to be houghed with these instruments, and the infantry attacked with poniards. To remonstrate against such absurd and visionary plans, or to caution their advocates against an unreserved display of hostile views, which, of itself, would be enough to defeat the ablest conspiracy; was not only useless, but dangerous. The public ferment grew rapidly, and Murat, who was fully apprised of its progress, began to shew his intention of anticipating resistance.

One Sunday afternoon, towards the end of April, as I was walking with a friend in the extensive gardens of the old royal palace El Retiro, (which, as they adjoin the Prado, are the usual resort of such as wish to avoid a crowded walk,) the sound of drums beating to arms from several quarters of the town, drew us, not without trepidation, to the inner gate of the large square, through which lay our way out of the palace. The confused voices of men, and the more distinct cries of the women, together with the view of two French regiments drawn up in the square, and in the act of loading their muskets, would have placed us in the awkward dilemma whether to venture out, or to stay, we

knew not how long, in the solitary gardens; had not a French officer, whom I addressed, assured us that we might pass in front of the troops without molestation. The Prado, which we had left thronged with people, was now perfectly empty, except where some horse-patroles of the French were scudding away in different directions. As we proceeded towards the centre of the town, we were told that the alarm had been simultaneous and general. Parties of French cavalry had been scouring the streets; and, in the wantonness of military insolence, some soldiers had made a cut now and then at such as did not fly fast enough before them. The street-doors were, contrary to the usual practice, all shut as in the dead of night, and but a few groups of men were seen talking about the recent and now subsiding alarm. Among these we saw one shewing his hat cut through by the sabre of a French dragoon. No one could either learn or guess the cause of this affray; but I am fully convinced that it was intended just to strike fear into the people, and to discourage large meetings at the public walks. It was a prelude to the second of May—that day which has heaped the curses of every Spaniard on the head which could plan its horrors, and the heart that could carry them through to the last, without shrinking.

The insurrection of the second of May did not arise from any concerted plan of the Spaniards; it was, on the contrary, brought about by Murat,

who, wishing to intimidate the country, artfully contrived the means of producing an explosion in the capital. The old King's brother and one of his sons, who had been left at Madrid, were, on that day, to start for Bayonne. The sight of the last members of the royal family leaving the country, under the present circumstances, could not but produce a strong sensation on a people whose feelings had for some months been racked to distraction. The Council of Regency strongly recommended the Infante's departure in the night; but Murat insisted on their setting off at nine in the morning. Long before that hour an extensive square, of which the new Palace forms the front, was crowded with people of the lower classes. On the Princes appearing in their travelling dresses, both men and women surrounded the carriages, and cutting the traces, shewed a determination to prevent their departure. One of Murat's aid-de-camps presenting himself at this moment, was instantly assaulted by the mob, and he would have fallen a victim to their fury but for the strong French guard stationed near that general's house. This guard was instantly drawn up, and ordered to fire on the people.

My house stood not far from the Palace, in a street leading to one of the central points of communication with the best part of the town. A rush of people crying "To arms," conveyed to us the first notice of the tumult. I heard that the French

troops were firing on the people; but the outrage appeared to me both so impolitic and enormous, that I could not rest until I went out to ascertain the truth. I had just arrived at an opening named Plazuéla de Santo Domingo, the meeting point of four large streets, one of which leads to the Palace, when, hearing the sound of a French drum in that direction, I stopped with a considerable number of decent and quiet people, whom curiosity kept rivetted to the spot. Though a strong piquet of infantry was fast advancing upon us, we could not imagine that we stood in any kind of danger. Under this mistaken notion we awaited their approach; but, seeing the soldiers halt and prepare their arms, we began instantly to disperse. A discharge of musketry followed in a few moments, and a man fell at the entrance of the street, through which I was, with a great throng, retreating from the fire. The fear of an indiscriminate massacre arose so naturally from this unprovoked assault, that every one tried to look for safety in the narrow cross streets on both sides of the way. I hastened on towards my house, and having shut the front door, could think of no better expedient, in the confused state of my mind, than to make ball-cartridges for a fowling-piece which I kept. The firing of musketry continued, and was to be heard in different directions. After the lapse of a few minutes, the report of large pieces of ordnance, at a short distance, greatly increased our alarm. They were fired from

a park of artillery, which, in great neglect, and with no definite object, was kept by the Spanish Government, in that part of the town. Murat, who had this day all his troops under arms, on fixing the points of which they were to gain possession, had not forgotten the park of artillery. A strong column approached it through a street facing the gate, at which Colonel Daoiz, a native of my town, and my own acquaintance, who happened to be the senior officer on duty, had placed two large pieces loaded with grape shot. Determined to perish rather than yield to the invaders, and supported in his determination by a few artillery-men, and some infantry under the command of Belarde, another patriot officer; he made considerable havock among the French, till, overpowered by numbers, both these gallant defenders of their country fell, the latter dead, the former desperately wounded. The silence of the guns made us suspect that the artillery had fallen into the hands of the assailants; and the report of some stragglers confirmed that conjecture.

A well-dressed man had, in the mean time, gone down the street, calling loudly on the male inhabitants to repair to an old depôt of arms. But he made no impression on that part of the town. To attempt to arm the multitude at this moment was, in truth, little short of madness. Soon after the beginning of the tumult, two or three columns of infantry entered by different gates, making themselves masters of the town. The route of the main

corps lay through the *Calle Mayor*, where the houses, consisting of four or five stories, afforded the inhabitants the means of wreaking their vengeance on the French, without much danger from their arms. Such as had guns, fired from the windows; while tiles, bricks, and heavy articles of furniture, were thrown by others upon the heads of the soldiers. But, now, the French had occupied every central position; their artillery had struck panic into the confused multitude; some of the houses, from which they had been fired at, had been entered by the soldiers; and the cavalry were making prisoners among such as had not early taken to flight. As the people had put to death every French soldier, who was found unarmed about the streets, the retaliation would have been fearful, had not some of the chief Spanish magistrates obtained a decree of amnesty, which they read in the most disturbed parts of the town.

But Murat thought he had not accomplished his object, unless an example was made on a certain number of the lower classes of citizens. As the amnesty excluded any that should be found bearing arms, the French patroles of cavalry, which were scouring the streets, searched every man they met, and making the clasp knives which our artisans and labourers are accustomed to carry in their pockets, a pretext for their cruel and wicked purpose, led about one hundred men to be tried by a Court Martial; in other words, to be butchered in cold

blood. This horrid deed, the blackest, perhaps, which has stained the French name during their whole career of conquest, was performed at the fall of day. A mock tribunal of French officers having ascertained that no person of note was among the destined victims, ordered them to be led out of the Retiro, the place of their short confinement, into the Prado; where they were despatched by the soldiers.

Ignorant of the real state of the town, and hearing that the tumult had ceased, I ventured out in the afternoon towards the Puerta del Sol, where I expected to learn some particulars of the day. The cross streets which led to that place were unusually empty; but as I came to the entrance of one of the avenues which open into that great rendezvous of Madrid, the bustle increased, and I could see an advanced guard of French soldiers formed two-deep, across the street, and leaving about one-third of its breadth open to such as wished to pass up and down. At some distance behind them, in the irregular square which bears the name of the *Sun's Gate*, I distinguished two pieces of cannon, and a very strong division of troops. Less than this hostile display would have been sufficient to check my curiosity, if, still possessed with the idea that it was not the interest of the French to treat us like enemies, I had not, like many others who were on the same spot, thought that the peaceful inhabitants would be allowed to proceed unmo-

lested about the streets of the town. Under this impression I went on without hesitation, till I was within fifty yards of the advanced guard. Here a sudden cry of *aux armes*, raised in the square, was repeated by the soldiers before me; the officer giving the command to make ready. The people fled up the street in the utmost consternation; but my fear having allowed me, instantly, to calculate both distances and danger, I made a desperate push towards the opening left by the soldiers, where a narrow lane, winding round the Church of San Luis, put me in a few seconds out of the range of the French muskets. No firing however being heard, I concluded that the object of the alarm was to clear the streets at the approach of night.

The increasing horror of the inhabitants, as they collected the melancholy details of the morning, would have accomplished that end, without any farther effort on the part of the oppressors. The bodies of some of their victims seen in several places; the wounded that were met about the streets; the visible anguish of such as missed their relations; and the spreading report that many were awaiting their fate at the Retiro, so strongly and painfully raised the apprehensions of the people, that the streets were absolutely deserted long before the approach of night. Every street-door was locked, and a mournful silence prevailed wherever I directed my steps. Full of the most gloomy ideas, I was approaching my lodgings by a place called

Postígo de San Martin, when I saw four Spanish soldiers bearing a man upon a ladder, the ends of which they supported on their shoulders. As they passed near me, the ladder being inclined forward, from the steepness of the street, I recognized the features of my townsman and acquaintance, Daoiz, livid with approaching death. He had lain wounded since ten in the morning, in the place where he fell. He was not quite insensible when I met him. The slight motion of his body, and the groan he uttered as the inequality of the ground, probably, increased his pain, will never be effaced from my memory.

A night passed under such impressions, baffles my feeble powers of description. A scene of cruelty and treachery exceeding all limits of probability, had left our apprehensions to range at large, with scarcely any check from the calculations of judgment. The dead silence of the streets since the first approach of night, only broken by the trampling of horses which now and then were heard passing along in large parties, had something exceedingly dismal in a populous town, where we were accustomed to an incessant and enlivening bustle. The *Madrid cries*, the loudest and most varied in Spain, were missed early next morning; and it was ten o'clock before a single street-door had been open. Nothing but absolute necessity could induce the people to venture out.

On the third day after the massacre, a note from

an intimate friend obliged me to cross the greatest part of the town; but though my way lay through the principal streets of Madrid, the number of Spaniards I met, did not literally amount to six. In every street and square of any note I found a strong guard of French infantry, lying beside their arms on the pavement, except the sentinel, who paced up and down at a short distance. A feeling of mortified pride mixed itself with the sense of insecurity which I experienced on my approaching these parties of foreign soldiers, whose presence had made a desert of our capital. Gliding by the opposite side of the street, I passed them without lifting my eyes from the ground. Once I looked straight in the face of an inferior officer—a serjeant I believe, wearing the cross of the *Legion d'honneur*—who, taking it as an insult, loaded me with curses, accompanied with threats and the most abusive language. The Puerta del Sol, that favourite lounge of the Madrid people, was now the *bivouac* of a French division of infantry and cavalry, with two twelve-pounders facing every leading street. Not a shop was open, and not a voice heard but such as grated the ear with a foreign accent.

On my return home, a feeling of deep melancholy had seized upon me, to which the troubles of my past life were lighter than a feather in the scale of happiness and misery. I confined myself to the house for several days, a prey to the most harassing anxiety. What course to take in the present crisis,

was a question for which I was not prepared, and in which no fact, no conjecture could lead me. My friend, the friend for whose sake alone I had changed my residence, had a mortal aversion to Seville—that town where he could not avoid acting in a detested capacity.* Some wild visions of freedom from his religious fetters, had been playing across his troubled mind, while the French approached Madrid; and though he now looked on their conduct with the most decided abhorrence, still he could hardly persuade himself to escape from the French bayonets, which he seemed to dread less than Spanish bigotry.

But my mind has dwelt too long on a painful subject, and I hope you will excuse me if I put off the conclusion till another Letter.

* That of a Catholic Clergyman.

LETTER XIII.

Seville, July 30, 1808.

Whether Murat began to suspect that his cruel method of intimidating the capital would rouse the provinces into open resistance, or whether (with the unsteadiness of purpose which often attends a narrow mind, acting more from impulse than judgment,) he wished to efface the impressions which his insolent cruelty had left upon the Spaniards; he soon turned his attention to the restoration of confidence. The folly, however, of such an endeavour, while (independent of the alarm and indignation which spread like wildfire over the country,) every gate of Madrid was kept by a strong guard of French infantry, must have been evident to any one but the thoughtless man who directed it. The people, it is true, ventured again freely out of the houses: but the public walks were deserted, and the theatres left almost entirely to the invaders.

Yet it was visible that the French had a party, which, though feeble in numbers, contained some of the ablest, and not a few of the most respectable

men at Madrid. Nay, I firmly believe, that had not the Spaniards of the middle and higher classes been from time immemorial brought up in the strictest habits of reserve on public measures, and without a sufficient boldness to form and express their opinions; the new French Dynasty would have obtained a considerable majority among our gentry. In the first place, two-thirds of the above description hold situations under Government, which they would have hoped to preserve by adherence to the new rulers. Next, we should consider the impression which the last twenty years had left on the thinking part of the community. Under the most profligate and despicable Court in Europe, a sense of political degradation had been produced among such of the Spaniards as were not blinded by a nationality of mere instinct. The true source of the enthusiasm which appeared on the accession of Ferdinand, was joy at the removal of his father; for hopes of a better government, under a young Prince of the common stamp, seated on an arbitrary throne, must have been wild and visionary indeed. As for the state of dependance on France, which would follow the acknowledgement of Joseph Bonaparte, it could not be more abject or helpless than under Ferdinand, had his wishes of a family alliance been granted by Napoleon. It cannot be denied that indignation at the treatment we have experienced strongly urged the nation to revenge; but passion is a blind guide, which thinking men will seldom

trust on political measures. To declare war against an army of veterans already in the heart of Spain, might be, indeed, an act of sublime patriotism; but was it not, too, a provocation more likely to bring ruin and permanent slavery on the country, than the admission of a new King, who, though a foreigner, had not been educated a despot, and who, for want of any constitutional claims, would be anxious to ground his rights on the acknowledgment of the nation?

Answers innumerable might be given to these arguments—and that I was far from allowing them great weight on my mind I can clearly prove, by my presence in the capital of Andalusia. But I cannot endure that blind, headlong, unhesitating patriotism which I find uniformly displayed in this town and province—a loud popular cry which every individual is afraid not to swell with his whole might, and which, though it may express the feeling of a great majority, does not deserve the name of public *opinion*, any more than the unanimous acclamations at an *Auto da Fé*. Dissent is the great characteristic of liberty. I am, indeed, as willing as any man to give my feeble aid to the Spanish cause against France; but I feel indignant at the compulsion which deprives my views of all individuality—which, from the national habits of implicit submission to whatever happens to be established, forces every man into the crowd, so that nothing

can save him but running for his life with the foremost.

I repeat, that I need not an apology for my political conduct on this momentous accasion. Feelings which will, indeed, bear examination, but on which I ground no merit, have brought me to the more honourable side of the question. Yet I must plead for candour and humanity in favour of such as, from the influence of the views I have touched upon, and in some cases, with a more upright intention than many an outrageous patriot, have opposed the beginning of hostilities. The name of traitor, with which they have been indiscriminately branded, must cut them off irrevocably from our party; and even the fear of being too late to avoid suspicion among us, may oblige those whom chance or the watchfulness of the Madrid Government, has hitherto prevented from joining us, to make at last, common interest with the French.

To escape from Madrid, after the news of the insurrection of Andalusia had reached that capital, was, in fact, an undertaking of considerable difficulty, and, as I have found by experience, attended with no small danger. Dupont's army had occupied the usual road through La Mancha, and no carriages were allowed by the French to set off for the refractory provinces. My decision, however, to join my countrymen, had been formed as soon as they took up arms against the French; and though

my friend shuddered at the idea of casting his lot with the defenders of the Pope and the Inquisition, he soon forgot all personal interest, in a question between a foreign army and his own natural friends.

There were no means of reaching Andalusia but through the province of Estremadura, and no other conveyance, at that time, than two Aragonese waggons, which having stopped at a small inn, or *venta*, three miles from Madrid, were not under the immediate control of the French police. The attention of the new Government was, besides, too much divided by the increasing difficulties of their situation, to extend itself beyond the gates of the town. We had only to make our way through the French guard, and walk to the *venta* on the day appointed by the waggoners. But if a single person met with no impediment at the gates, luggage of any description was sure to be intercepted; and we had to take our choice between staying, or travelling a fortnight, without more than a shirt in our pocket.

Thus lightly accoutred, however, we left Madrid at three in the afternoon of the 15th of June, and walked under a burning sun to meet our waggons. Summer is, of all seasons, in Spain, the most inconvenient for travellers; and nothing but necessity will induce the natives to cross the burning plains, which abound in the country. To avoid the fierceness of the sun, the coaches start between three and four in the morning, stop from nine till

four in the afternoon, and complete the day's journey between nine and ten in the evening. We, alas! could not expect that indulgence. Each of us confined with our respective waggoner, within the small space which the load had left near the awning, had to endure the intolerable closeness of the waggon, under the dead stillness of a burning atmosphere, so impregnated with floating dust, as often to produce a feeling of suffocation. Our stages required not only early rising, but travelling till noon. After a disgusting dinner at the most miserable inns of the unfrequented road we were following, our task began again, till night, when we could rarely expect the enjoyment even of such a bed as the Spanish *ventas* afford. Our stock of linen allowed us but one change, and we could not stop to have it washed. The consequences might be easily foreseen. The heat, and the company of our waggoners, who often passed the night by our side, soon completed our wretchedness, by giving us a sample of one, perhaps the worst, of the Egyptian plagues; which, as we had not yet got through one-half of our journey, held out a sad prospect of increase till our arrival at Seville.

There was something so cheering in the consciousness of the sacrifice both of ease and private views we were making, in the idea of relieving our friends from the anxiety in which the fear of our joining the French party must have kept them—in the hopes of being received with open arms by

those with whom we had made common interest at a time when every chance seemed to be against them—that our state of utter discomfort could not at first make any impression on our spirits. The slip of New Castille, which lies between Madrid and the frontiers of Estremadura, presented nothing that could in the least disturb these agreeable impressions; and the reception we met with from the inhabitants was in every respect as friendly as we had expected. An instance of simple unaffected kindness shewn to us by a poor woman near Móstoles, would hardly deserve being mentioned, but for the painful contrast by which the rest of our journey has endeared it to my memory.—Oppressed by the heat and closeness of our situation, and preferring a direct exposure to the rays of the sun in the open air, we had left our heavy vehicles at some distance, when the desire of enjoying a more refreshing draught than could be obtained from the heated jars which hung by the side of our waggons, induced us to approach a cottage, at a short distance from the road. A poor woman sat alone near the door, and though there was nothing in our dress that could give us even the appearance of gentlemen, she answered our request for a glass of water, by eagerly pressing us to sit and rest ourselves. "Water," she said, "in the state I see you in, is sure, Gentlemen, to do you harm. I fortunately have some milk in the cottage, and must beg you to accept it.—You, dear Sirs," she added, "are, I

know, making your escape from the French at Madrid. God bless you, and prosper your journey!" Her sympathy was so truly affecting, that it actually brought tears into our eyes. To decline the offer of the milk, as well as to speak of payment, would have been an affront to the kind-hearted female; and giving her back the blessing she had so cordially bestowed upon us, was all we could do to shew our gratitude.

Cheered up by this humble, yet hearty welcome among our countrymen, we proceeded for two or three days; our feelings of security increasing all the while with the distance from Madrid. It was, however, just in that proportion that we were approaching danger. We had, about nine in the morning, reached the Calzada de Oropesa, on the borders of Estremadura, when we observed, with painful surprise, a crowd of country people, who, collecting hastily round us, began to inquire who we were, accompanying their questions with the fierce and rude tone which forebodes mischief, among the testy inhabitants of our southern provinces. The *Alcalde* soon presented himself, and, having heard the account we gave of ourselves and our journey, wisely declared to the people that, our language being genuine Spanish, we might be allowed to proceed. He added, however, a word of advice, desiring us to be prepared to meet with people more inquisitive and suspicious than those of Oropesa, who would make us pay dear for any flaw

they might discover in our narrative, As if to try our veracity by means of intimidation, he acquainted us with the insurrections which had taken place in every town and village, and the victims which had scarcely failed in any instance, to fall under the knives of the peasantry.

The truth and accuracy of this warning became more and more evident as we advanced through Estremadura. The notice we attracted at the approach of every village, the threats of the labourers whom we met near the road, and the accounts we heard at every inn, fully convinced us that we could not reach our journey's end without considerable danger. The unfortunate propensity to shed blood, which tarnishes many a noble quality in the southern Spaniards, had been indulged in most towns of any note, under the cloak of patriotism. Frenchmen, of course, though long established in Spain, were pointed objects of the popular fury; but most of the murders which we heard of, were committed on Spaniards who, probably, owed their fate to private pique and revenge, and not to political opinions. We found the *Alcaldes* and *Corregidores*, to whom we applied for protection, perfectly intimidated, and fearing the consequences of any attempt to check the blind fury of the people under them. But no description of mine can give so clear a view of the state of the country, as the simple narrative of the popular rising at Almaráz, the little

town which gives its name to a well-known bridge on the Tagus, as it was delivered to us by the *Alcalde*, a rich farmer of that place. The people of his district, upon hearing the accounts from Madrid, and the insurrections of the chief towns of their province, flocked, on a certain day, before the Alcalde's house, armed with whatever weapons they had been able to collect, including sickles, pick-axes, and similar implements of husbandry. Most happily for the worthy magistrate, the insurgents had no complaint against him: and on the approach of the rustic mob, he confidently came out to meet them. Having with no small difficulty obtained a hearing, the Alcalde desired to be informed of their designs and wishes. The answer appears to me unparalleled in the history of mobs. "We wish, Sir, to kill somebody," said the spokesman of the insurgents. "Some one has been killed at Truxillo; one or two others at Badajoz, another at Merida, and we will not be behind our neighbours. Sir, we will kill a traitor." As this commodity could not be procured in the village, it was fortunate for us that we did not make our appearance at a time when the good people of Almaraz might have made us a substitute, on whom to display their loyalty. The fact, however, of their having no animosities to indulge under the mask of patriotism, is a creditable circumstance in their character. A meeting which we had, soon after leaving the vil-

lage, with an armed party of these patriots, confirmed our opinion that they were among the least savage of their province.

The bridge of Almaraz stands at the distance of between three and four miles from the village. It was built in the time of Charles the fifth, by the town of Plasencia; but it would not have disgraced an ancient Roman architect. The Tagus, carrying, even at this season, a prodigious quantity of water, passes under the greater of the two arches, which support the bridge. Though the height and span of these arches give to the whole an air of boldness which borders upon grandeur, the want of symmetry in their size and shape, and the narrow, though very deep, channel to which the rocky banks confine the river, abate considerably the effect it might have been made to produce. Yet there is something impressive in a bold work of art standing single in a wild tract of country, where neither great towns, nor a numerous and well distributed population, with all the attending marks of industry, luxury, and refinement, have prepared the imagination to expect it. As soon, therefore, as the bridge was seen at a distance, we left the waggons, and allowing them to proceed before us, lingered to enjoy the view.

Just as we stood admiring the solidity and magnitude of the structure, casting by chance our eyes towards the mountain which rises on the opposite side, and confines the road to a narrow space on the

precipitous bank of the river, we saw a band of from fifteen to twenty men, armed with guns, leaving the wood where they had been concealed, and coming down towards the waggons. The character of the place, combined with the dresses, arms, and movements of the men, convinced us at once that we had fallen into the hands of banditti. But as they could take very little from us, we thought we should meet with milder treatment if we approached them without any signs of fear. On our coming up to the place, we observed some of the party searching the waggons; but seeing the rest talking quietly with the carriers, our suspicions of robbery were at an end. The whole band, we found, consisted of peasants, who, upon an absurd report that the French intended to send arms and ammunition to the frontiers of Portugal, had been stationed on that spot to examine every cart and waggon, and stop all suspicious persons. Had these people been less good-natured and civil, we could not have escaped being sent, in that dangerous character, to some of the Juntas which had been established in Spain. But being told by my friend that he was a clergyman, and hearing us curse the French in a true patriotic style; they wished us a happy journey, and allowed us to proceed unmolested.

We expected to arrive at Merida on a Saturday evening, and to have left it early on Sunday after the first mass, which, for the benefit of travellers and labourers, is performed before dawn. But the

axletree of one of our waggons breaking down, we were obliged to sleep that night at a *Venta*, and to spend the next day in the above-mentioned city. The remarkable ruins which still shew the ancient splendour of the Roman *Emerita Augusta* would, in more tranquil times, have afforded us a pleasant walk round the town, and more than repaid us for the delay. Fatigue, however, induced us to confine ourselves to the inn, where we expected, by the repóse of one day, to recruit our strength for the rest of our journey. Having taken a luncheon, we retired to our beds for a long *siesta*, when the noise of a mob rushing down the street and gathering in front of the inn, drew us, nearly undressed, to the window. As far as the eye could reach, nothing was to be seen but a compact crowd of peasants, most of them with clasp knives in their hands. At the sight of us, such as were near began to brandish their weapons, threatening they would make mince-meat of every Frenchman in the inn. Unable to comprehend the cause of this tumult, and fearing the consequences of the blind fury which prevailed in the country, we hurried on our clothes, and ran down to the front hall of the inn. There we found twelve dragoons standing in two lines on the inside of the gate, holding their carbines ready to fire, as the officer who commanded them warned the people that were blockading the gate they should do upon the first who ventured into the house. The innkeeper walked up and

down the empty hall, bewailing the fate of his house, which he assured us would soon be set on fire by the mob. We now gathered from him the cause of this turmoil and confusion. A young Frenchman had been taken on the road to Portugal, with letters to Junot, and on this ground was forwarded under an escort of soldiers to the Captain-general of the Province at Badajoz. The crowd in the street consisted of about two thousand peasants, who having volunteered their services, were under training at the expense of the city. The poor prisoner had been imprudently brought into the town when the recruits were in the principal square indulging in the idleness of a Sunday. On hearing that he was a Frenchman, they drew their knives and would have cut him to pieces, but for the haste which the soldiers made with him towards the inn.

The crowd, by this time, was so fierce and vociferous, that we could not doubt they would break in without delay. My companion, being fully aware of our dangerous position, urged me to follow him to the gate, in order to obtain a hearing, while the people still hesitated to make their way between the two lines of soldiers. We approached the impenetrable mass; but before coming within the reach of the knives, my friend called loudly to the foremost to abstain from doing us any injury; for though without any marks of his profession about him, he was a priest, who, with a brother, (point-

ing to me,) had made his escape from Madrid to join his countrymen. I verily believe, that as fear is said sometimes to lend wings, it did on this occasion prompt my dear friend with words; for a more fluent and animated speech than his has seldom been delivered in Spanish. The effects of this unusual eloquence were soon visible among those of the rioters that stood nearest; and one of the ringleaders assured the orator, that no harm was meant against us. On our requesting to leave the house, we were allowed to proceed into the great square.

My friend there inquired the name of the Bishop's substitute, or *Vicar General;* and, with an agreeable surprise, we learnt that it was Señor Valenzuela. We instantly recognised one of our fellow students at the University of Seville. He had been elected a Member of the Revolutionary Junta of Merida, and though not more confident of his influence over the populace than the rest of his colleagues, whom the present mob had reduced to a state of visible consternation, he instantly offered us his house as an asylum for the night, and engaged to obtain for us a passport for the remainder of the journey. In the mean time, the military commander of the place, attended by some of the magistrates, had promised the crowd to throw the young Frenchman into a dungeon, as he had done a few nights before with his own adjutant, against whom these very same recruits had risen on the

parade, with so murderous a spirit, that though protected by a few regulars, they wounded him severely, and would have taken his life but for the interference of the Vicar, who, bearing the consecrated host in his hands, placed the officer under the protection of that powerful charm. The Frenchman was, accordingly, conducted to prison; but neither the soldiers nor the magistrates, who surrounded him, could fully protect him from the savage fierceness of the peasants, who crowding upon him, as half dead with terror, he was slowly dragged to the town goal, stuck the points of their knives into several parts of his body. Whether he finally was sacrificed to the popular fury, or, by some happy chance, escaped with life, I have not been able to learn.

Though not far from our journey's end, we were by no means relieved from our fears and misgivings. Often were we surrounded by bands of reapers, who, armed with their sickles, made us go through the ordeal of a minute interrogatory. But what cast the thickest gloom on our minds was, the detailed account we received from an Alcalde, of the events which had taken place at Seville. A revolution, however laudable its object, is seldom without some features which nothing but distance of time or place, can soften into tolerable regularity. We were too well acquainted with the inefficiency of most of the men who had suddenly been raised into power, not to feel a strong reluctance to place

ourselves under their government and protection. The only man of talents in the Junta of Seville was Saavedra, the ex-minister.* Dull ignorance, mixed with a small portion of inactive honesty, was the general character of that body. But a man of blood had found a place in it, and we could not but fear the repetition of the horrid scene with which he opened the revolution that was to give him a share in the supreme government of the province.

The Count Tilly, a titled Andalusian gentleman, of some talents, unbounded ambition, and no principle, had, on the first appearance of a general disposition to resist the French, employed himself in the organization of the intended revolt. His principal agents were men of low rank, highly endowed with the characteristic shrewdness, quickness, and loquacity of that class of Andalusians, and thereby admirably fitted to appear at the head of the populace. Tilly, however, either from the maxim that a successful revolution must be cemented with blood—a notion which the French Jacobins have too widely spread among us—or, what is more probable, from private motives of revenge, had made the death of the Count del Aguila an essential part of his plan.

That unfortunate man was a member of the town corporation of Seville, and as such he joined the established authorities in their endeavours to stop

* See Letter X.

the popular ferment. But no sooner had the insurrection burst out, than both he and his colleagues made the most absolute surrender of themselves and their power into the hands of the people. This, however, was not enough to save the victim whom Tilly had doomed to fall. One of the inferior leaders of the populace, one Luque, an usher at a grammar-school, had engaged to procure the death of the Count del Aguila. Assisted by his armed associates, he dragged the unhappy man to the prison-room for noblemen, or Hidalgos, which stands over one of the gates of the town; and, deaf to his intreaties, the vile assassin had him shot on the spot. The corpse, bound to the arm chair, in which the Count expired, was exposed for that and the next day to the public. The ruffian who performed the atrocious deed, was instantly raised to the rank of lieutenant in the army. Tilly himself is one of the Junta; and so selfish and narrow are the views which prevail in that body, that, if the concentration of the now disjointed power of the provinces should happen, the members, it is said, will rid themselves of his presence, by sending a man they fear and detest, to take a share in the supreme authority of the kingdom.*

The effects of the revolutionary success on a people at large, like those of slight intoxication on

* This was actually the case at the creation of the Central Junta.

the individual, call forth every good and bad quality in a state of exaggeration. To an acute but indifferent observer, Seville, as we found it on our return, would have been a most interesting study. He could not but admire the patriotic energy of the inhabitants, their unbounded devotion to the cause of their country, and the wonderful effort by which, in spite of their passive habits of submission, they had ventured to dare both the authority of their rulers, and the approaching bayonets of the French. He must, however, have looked with pity on the multiplied instances of ignorance and superstition which the extraordinary circumstances of the country had produced.

To my friend and companion, whose anti-catholic prejudices are the main source of his mental sufferings, the religious character which the revolution has assumed, is like a dense mist concealing or disfiguring every object which otherwise would gratify his mind. He can see no prospect of liberty behind the cloud of priests who every where stand foremost to take the lead of our patriots. It is in vain to remind him that many among those priests, whose professional creed he detests, are far from being sincere; that if, by the powerful assistance of England, we succeed in driving the French out of the country, the moral and political state of the nation must benefit by the exertion. The absence of the King, also, is a fair opening for the restoration of our ancient liberties; and the actual exist-

ence of popular Juntas, must eventually lead to the re-establishment of the Cortes. To this he answers that he cannot look for any direct advantage from the feeling which prompts the present resistance to the ambition of Napoleon, as it chiefly arises from an inveterate attachment to the religious system whence our present degradation takes source. That if the course of events should enable those who have secretly cast off the yoke of superstition, to attempt a political reform, it will be by grafting the feeble shoots of Liberty upon the stock of Catholicism; an experiment which has hitherto, and must ever prove abortive. That from the partial and imperfect knowledge of politics and government which the state of the nation permits, no less than from the feelings produced by the monstrous abuse of power under which Spain has groaned for ages, too much will be attempted against the crown; which, thus weakened in a nation whose habits, forms, and manners, are moulded and shaped to despotism, will leave it for a time a prey either to an active or an indolent anarchy, and finally resume its ancient influence.

Partial as I must own myself to every thing that falls from my friend, I will not deny that these views are too general, and that, though the principles on which he grounds them are sound, the inferences are drawn much too independently of future events and circumstances. Yet the dim coloured medium through which he sees the state

of a country, whence he derives a constant feeling of unhappiness, will make him, I fear, but little fit to assist with his talents the work of Spanish reform, so long, at least, as he shall feel the iron yoke which Spain has laid on his neck. I have, therefore, formed a plan for his removal to England, whenever the progress of the French arms, which our present advantages cannot permanently check, shall enable him to take his departure, so as to shew that if his own country oppresses him, he will not seek relief among her enemies.

APPENDIX TO LETTERS III. AND VII.*

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

SUPPRESSION OF THE JESUITS IN SPAIN.

Extracted from a Letter of Lord ——.

THE suppression of the Jesuits in Spain always appeared to me a very extraordinary occurrence; and the more I heard of the character of Charles III. by whose edict they were expelled, the more singular the event appeared. Don Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, who had been acquainted with all, and intimate with many, of those who accomplished this object, related several curious circumstances attending it; gave me a very interesting and diverting account of the characters concerned, and sent me, in 1809, two or three letters, which are still in my possession, containing some of the secret

* The account in Letter VII. of the anxiety manifested by Charles III. on the occasion of sending to Rome a manuscript in the hand of a Spanish simpleton, whom the superstition of that country wished to invest with the honours of Saintship, was compiled from local tradition, and the recollections preserved from a former perusal of the present Appendix. Its noble author, whose love of the literature of Spain, and great acquaintance with that country, would be enough to designate him, were he not best known by a peculiar benevolence of heart, which no man ever expressed so faithfully in the affability of his manners; has subsequently favoured the writer of the preceding Letters with his permission to publish this sketch. The attentive reader will observe some slight variations between my story of Brother Sebastian and that given in this Appendix. But as they all relate to circumstances connected with the city of Seville, I am unwilling to omit or to alter what I have heard from my townsmen and the contemporaries of Sebastian himself.

history of this very remarkable transaction. I send you the substance of his conversation, with some additional anecdotes related to me by other Spaniards. They may throw light on the accidents and combinations which led to the suppression of that formidable body of men.

Charles III. came to the throne of Spain with dispositions very unfavourable to the Jesuits. Not only the disputes with the Court of Rome, to which the government of Naples was at all times exposed, but the personal affronts which he conceived himself to have received from Father Râvago, the Jesuit, Confessor to his brother Ferdinand, estranged him from that formidable company. The jealousy entertained by Barbara, Queen of Spain, of any influence which the Court of Naples might obtain in the councils of her husband, and the opposite system of politics adopted by the two Courts, had convinced the Jesuits of the impossibility of being well with both. Not foreseeing the premature death of Ferdinand, and the sterility of his wife, they had very naturally exerted all their arts to ingratiate themselves with the powerful crown of Spain, rather than with the less important Court of Naples. They were accordingly satisfied with placing Padre Râvago about Ferdinand, and, either from policy or neglect, allowed Charles to select his Confessor from another order of regular clergy. Queen Barbara was a patroness of the Jesuits; and, very possibly, her favourite, the eunuch Farinelli, exerted his influence in their favour. The Marquis of Ensenada, long the minister of Ferdinand, was their avowed protector, ally, and partizan; and the Queen's ascendancy over her husband's mind was too firmly established to be shaken even by the removal of that minister. But upon the failure of that Princess, and the subsequent death of the King himself, the Jesuits experienced a sudden and

fatal reverse of fortune. The policy of the Court of Madrid was altered. Charles felt deep resentment against England for the transactions in the Bay of Naples. The influence of the Court of Versailles was gradually restored. It may be easily supposed that the active enemies of the Jesuits in France and Italy began to turn their eyes to the Court of Madrid with more hopes of co-operation in that quarter than they had hitherto ever ventured to entertain. There is, however, no reason to imagine that till the nomination of Roda, to the place of Minister of Grace and Justice, any actual design was formed by persons in trust or power, of having recourse to such violent expedients as were afterwards resorted to for the expulsion of the Jesuits.

Don Manuel de Roda, an Aragonese by birth, and an eminent lawyer at Madrid, had imbibed very early both the theological and political tenets of the Jansenists. He had been distinguished at the bar by his resolute and virulent opposition to the members of the *Colegios Mayores*. That institution, founded for the education and assistance of poor students, had been perverted from its original intentions: for though no one could be admitted but upon competition and a plurality of voices, it consisted *de facto* entirely of persons of family. Its members, by the aid of exclusive privileges in the career of the law, by mutual assistance, and a corporation spirit, not unlike that of the Jesuits themselves, had obtained a large portion of ecclesiastical and legal patronage, and enjoyed almost a monopoly of the highest judicicial offices in Castile. The members of these colleges were enabled to succeed to the offices of *Fiscal*, *Oydor*, and other magistracies, without the previous ceremony of passing advocates, which was a gradation none but those who were *Colegiales* could dispense with. These privileges

gave them great influence, and the expense which attended their elections, (especially that of the Rectors of each College, an annual office of great consideration among them,) served as an effectual bar to the pretensions of any who had not birth and wealth to recommend them. It is just, however, to observe, that if they were infected with the narrow spirit of corporations, they retained to the last the high sense of honour which is always the boast, and sometimes the characteristic, of privileged orders of men. It has ever been acknowledged by their enemies, that since the abolition of their exclusive privileges, which Roda lived to accomplish, and, yet more, since their further discouragement by the Prince of Peace, the judicial offices have not been filled by persons of equal characrer for integrity, learning, and honour. But those who studied the laws without the advantages of an education at the *Colegios Mayores*, were naturally and justly indignant at the privileges which they enjoyed. The boldness of Don Manuel de Roda's opposition to an order of men so invidiously distinguished, ingratiated him with the lawyers, who, in Spain as elsewhere, constitute a large, active, and formidable body of men. But the same high spirit having involved him in a dispute with a man of rank and influence, his friend and protector the Duke of Alva thought it prudent for him to withdraw from Court; and with a view of enabling him to do so with credit to himself, entrusted him with a public commission to Rome, where he was received as the agent of the King of Spain. He here, no doubt, acquired that knowledge which was so useful to him afterwards in the prosecution of his important design. By what fatality he became minister, I know not. Charles III. must have departed from his general rule of appointing every

Minister at the recommendation of his predecessor, for Roda succeeded a Marquis of Campo Villar, who had been educated at the *Colegios Mayores*, and was attached to the Jesuits. Possibly the interest of the Duke of Alva was the cause of his promotion. He was appointed Minister of Grace and Justice, I believe, as early as 1763, though Jovellanos implies that he was not Minister till 1765 or even 1766. From the period of his nomination, however, one may safely date the design of suppressing the Jesuits in Spain. It was systematically, though slowly and secretly pursued, by a portion of the Spanish Cabinet. Indeed the views, not only of the ministry, but of the understanding of Roda, were so exclusively directed to such objects, that Azara sarcastically observed, that he wore spectacles, through one glass of which he could perceive nothing but a *Colegial*, and through the other nothing but a *Jesuit*. If, however, his views were contracted, he had the advantage often attributed to a short sight—a clear and more accurate perception of every thing that came within the limited scope of his organs. He had the discernment to discover those, who, with dispositions congenial to his own had talents to assist him. He had cunning enough to devise the means of converting to his purpose the weaknesses of such as without predisposition to co-operate with him, were from station or accident necessary to his design. Though a strict Jansenist himself, he selected his associates and partizans indiscriminately from Jansenists and philosophers or freethinkers. Among the first, the most remarkable was Tavira, bishop of Salamanca; among the latter Campomanes and the Count de Aranda.

Before we speak of the co-operation of these powerful men, it is necessary to explain the difficulties which oc-

curred in securing the sanction and assistance of the King himself. Charles III., though no friend to the Jesuits, was still less a friend, either by habit or principle, to innovation. He was not less averse by constitution to all danger. Moreover, he was religious and conscientious in the extreme. The acquiescence and sanction of his Confessor was indispensably necessary to the adoption of any measure affecting the interests of the Church. Neither would the bare consent of the Confessor (in itself no easy matter to obtain) be sufficient. He must be zealous in the cause, and cautious as well as active in the promotion of it. Great secresy must be observed; for the scheme might be defeated as effectually by indifference or indiscretion as by direct resistance or intrigue. There was little in the character of the Confessor to encourage a man less enterprising or less cunning than Roda.

Fr. Joaquin de Elita, or Father Osma, (so called from the place of his birth) was a friar of little education and less ability, attached by habit to the order to which he belonged, and in other respects exempt from those passions of affection or ambition, as well as from that ardour of temper or force of opinion, which either excite men to great undertakings or render them subservient to those of others. Roda, however, from personal observation, and from an intimate knowledge of those passions which a monastic life generally engenders, discovered the means of engaging even Father Osma in his views. None who have not witnessed it can conceive the effect of institutions, of which vows of perpetual celibacy form a necessary part. Their convent, their order, the place of their nativity, the village or church to which they belong, often engage in the minds of religious men the affections which in the course of nature would have been bestowed

on their kindred, their wives, or their children. Padre Elita was born in the city of which the venerable and illustrious Palafox had been bishop. The sanctity of that eminent prelate's life, the fervour of his devotion, the active benevolence and Christian fortitude of his character, had insured him the reputation of a saint, and might, it was thought, by many Catholics, entitle him to canonization.* Roda, however, well knew that the Jesuits

* There is a Life of Palafox, published at Paris, in 1767. The design of the unknown author is evidently to mortify and prejudice the Jesuits by exalting the character of one of their earliest and fiercest opponents. The author is, however, either an ardent fanatic of the Jansenist party, and as superstitious as those he wishes to expose; or he promotes the cause of the Philosophers of France and Spain by affecting devotion, and conciliating many true believers to the measure of suppressing the Jesuits.—Palafox was the illegitimate child of Don Jayme de Palafox y Mendoza, by a lady of rank, who, to conceal her pregnancy, retired to the waters of Fitero in Navarre, and being delivered on the 24th June, 1600, to avoid the scandal, took the wicked resolution of drowning her child in the neighbouring river The woman employed to perpetrate this murder was detected before she effected her purpose, the child saved, and brought up by an old dependant of the house of Ariza till he was ten years old, when his father returned from Rome, acknowledged, relieved, and educated him at Alcala and Salamanca. His mother became a nun of the barefooted Carmelite order. Palafox was introduced at Court, and to the Count Duke de Olivares in 1626, and was soon after named to the council of India. An illness of his paternal sister, the funeral of two remarkable men, and the piety of his mother, made such impression upon him, that he gave himself up to the most fervent devotion, and soon after took orders. He became chaplain to the Queen of Hungary, Philip IVth's sister, and travelled through Italy, Germany, Flanders, and France. In 1639, he was consecrated Bishop of Angelopolis, or Puebla de los Angeles, in America. His first quarrel with the Jesuits was on the subject of tithes. Lands on which tithes were payable had been alienated in favour of the Company, and they pretended, that when once the property of their body, they

bore great enmity to his memory on account of his disputes with them in South America; he foresaw that every exertion of that powerful body would be made to resist the introduction of his name into the Rubric. He therefore suggested very adroitly to Father Osma the glory which would redound to his native town if this object could be accomplished. He painted in glowing colours the gratitude he would inspire in Spain, and the admiration he would excite in the Catholic world if through his means a Spaniard of so illustrious a name and of such acknowledged virtue could be actually sainted at Rome. He had the satisfastion of finding that Father Osma espoused the cause with a fervour hardly to be expected from his character. He not only advised but instigated and urged the King to support the pretensions of the bishop of Osma with all his influence and authority. But here an apparent difficulty arose, which Roda turned to advantage, and converted to the instrument of involving the Court of Madrid in an

were exempt from that tax. The second ground was a pretended privilege of the Jesuits to preach without the permission of the Diocesan, against which Palafox contended. The Jesuits, having the Viceroy of New Spain on their side, obliged Palafox to fly; on which occasion he wrote his celebrated letters against his enemies. A brief of the Pope in his favour did not prevent his being recalled in civil terms, by the King. At the petition of the Jesuits, who dreaded his return to America, the King named him to the bishopric of Osma. Of the austerity and extravagance of his principles, the following resolutions of the pious bishop are specimens: Not to admit any woman to his presence, and never to speak to one but with his eyes on the ground, and the door open. Never to pay a woman a compliment, but when the not doing so would appear singular or scandalous; and never to look a female in the face. When ever compelled to visit a woman, to wear a cross with sharp points next the skin.

additional dispute with the Roman Pontiff. Charles III. was not unwilling to support the pretensions of his Confessor's favourite Saint; but he had a job of his own in that branch to drive with the Court of Rome, and he accordingly solicited in his turn the co-operation of Father Osma, to obtain the canonization of Brother Sebastian.

The story of this last-mentioned obscure personage is so curious, and illustrates so forcibly the singular character of Charles, that it will not be foreign to my purpose to relate it.

During Philip the Fifth's residence in Seville, Hermano Sebastian, a sort of lay-brother* of the Convent of San Francisco el Grande, was accustomed to visit the principal houses of the place with an image of the Infant Jesus, in quest of alms for his order. The affected sanctity of his life, the demure humility of his manner, and the little sentences of morality with which he was accustomed to address the women and children whom he visited, acquired him the reputation of a saint in a small circle of simple devotees. The good man began to think himself inspired, to compose short works of devotion, and even to venture occasionally on the character of a *prophet*. Accident or design brought him to the *palace*: he was introduced to the apartments of the princes, and Charles then a child, took a prodigious fancy to Brother Sebastian of the *Niño Jesus*, as he was generally called in the neighbourhood, from the image he carried when soliciting alms for his convent. To ingratiate himself with the royal infant, the old man made Charles a present of some

* He was not a *lay-brother*, but a *Donado*, a species of religious drudges, who, without taking vows, wear the habit of the order; and may leave it when they please. The *Donados* are never called *Fray*, but *Hermano*.—*See Doblado's Letter* IX.

prayers written in his own hand, and told him, with an air of sanctified mystery, that he would one day be King of Spain, in reward, no doubt, of his early indications of piety and resignation. The present delighted Charles, and, young as he was, the words and sense of the prophecy sunk deep in his superstitious and retentive mind. Though he was seldom known to mention the circumstance for years, yet he never parted with the manuscript. It was his companion by day and by night, at home and in the field. When he was up, it was constantly in his pocket; and it was placed under his pillow during his hours of rest. But when, by his accession to the crown of Spain, its author's prediction was fulfilled, the work acquired new charms in his eyes, his confidence in Brother Sebastian's sanctity was confirmed, and his memory was cherished with additional fondness by the grateful and credulous monarch. At the same time, therefore, that the pretensions of the Bishop of Osma to canonization were urged at Rome, the Spanish minister was instructed to speak a good word for the humble friar Sebastian. The lively and sarcastic Azara was entrusted with this negotiation; and, as I know that he was at some pains to preserve the documents of this curious transaction, it is not impossible that he may have left memoirs of his life, in which the whole correspondence will, no doubt, be detailed with minuteness and exquisite humour.

The Court of Rome is ever fertile in expedients, especially when the object is to start difficulties and suggest obstacles to any design. The investigation of Palafox's pretensions was studiously protracted; and it was easy to perceive that the influence of the Jesuits in the Sacred College was exerted to throw new impediments in the way of their adversary's canonization. Though the Court of Rome could never seriously have thought of

giving Brother Sebastian a place in the Rubric, they amused Charles III. by very long discussions on his merits, and went through, with scrupulous minuteness, all the previous ceremonies for ascertaining the conduct of a saint.

It is a maxim, that the original of every writing of a person claiming to be made a saint, must be examined at Rome by the Sacred College, and that no copy, however attested, can be admitted as sufficient testimony, if the original document is in existence. The book, therefore, to which the Spanish Monarch was so attached, was required at Rome. Here was an abundant source of negotiation and delay. Charles could not bring himself to part with his treasure, and the forms of canonization precluded the College from proceeding without it. At length, the King, from his honest and disinterested zeal for the friar, was prevailed upon. But Azara was instructed to have the College summoned, and the Cardinals ready, on the day and even the hour at which it was calculated that the most expeditious courier could convey the precious book from Madrid to Rome. Relays were provided on the road, and Charles III. himself deposited the precious manuscript in the hands of his most trusty messenger, with long and anxious injunctions to preserve it most religiously, and not to lose a moment in sallying forth from Rome on his return, when the interesting contents of the volume should have been perused.

The interim was to Charles III. a "phantasma, or a hideous dream." He never slept, and scarcely took any nourishment during the few days he was separated from the beloved paper. His domestic economy, and the regulation of his hours, which neither public business nor private affliction in any other instance disturbed, was altered; and the chase, which was not interrupted

even by the illness and death of his children, was suspended till Brother Sebastian's original MS. could again accompany him to the field. He stood at the window of his palace counting the drops of rain on the glasses, and sighing deeply. Business, pleasure, conversation, and meals, were suspended, till the long-expected treasure returned, and restored the monarch to his usual avocations.

When, however, his Confessor discovered that the Court of Rome was trifling with their solicitations, that to Palafox there was an insurmountable repugnance, and when the King began to suspect that the sacrifice he had been compelled to make was all to no purpose, and that the pains of separation had been inflicted upon him without the slightest disposition to grant him the object for which alone he had been inclined to endure it, both he and his Confessor grew angry. The opposition to their wishes was, perhaps, truly, and certainly industriously traced to the Jesuits.

In the mean while a riot occurred at Madrid. In 1766, the people rose against the regulation of police which attempted to suppress the cloaks and large hats, as affording too great opportunities for the concealment of assassins. These and other obnoxious measures were attributed to the Marquis of Squilace, who, in his quality of favourite as well as foreigner, was an unpopular minister of finance. Charles III. was compelled to abandon him; and the Count of Aranda, disgraced under Ferdinand VI., and lately appointed to the captain-generalship of Valencia, was named President of the council of Castile, for the purpose of pacifying by his popularity, and suppressing by his vigour, the remaining discontents of the people. He entered into all Roda's views. As an Aragonese, he was an enemy of the *Co-*

legios Mayores, for they admitted few subjects of that Crown to their highest distinctions: and as a free-thinker, and man of letters, he was anxious to suppress the Jesuits.

Reports, founded or unfounded, were circulated in the country, and countenanced by these powerful men, that the Jesuits had instigated the riots of Madrid. It was confidently asserted, that many had been seen in the mob, though disguised; and Father Isidro Lopez, an Asturian, who was considered as one of the leading characters in the company, was expressly named as having been active in the streets. Ensenada, the great protector of the Jesuits in the former reign, had been named by the populace as the proper successor of Squilace, and there were certainly either grounds for suspecting, or pretexts for attributing the discontent of the metropolis to the machinations of the Jesuits and their protector the ex-minister Ensenada. Enquiries were instituted. Many witnesses were examined; but great secresy was preserved. It is, however, to be presumed, that, under colour of investigating the causes of the late riot, Aranda and Roda contrived to collect every information which could inflame the mind of the King against those institutions which they were determined to subvert. They had revived the controversy respecting the conduct of the venerable Palafox, and drawn the attention both of Charles III. and the public to the celebrated letter of that prelate, in which he describes the machinations of the Jesuits in South America, and which their party had but a few years since sentenced to be publicly burnt in the great square of Madrid.

But, even with the assistance of Father Osma, the acquiescence of the King, and the concert of many foreign enemies of the Company, Roda and Aranda were in want

of the additional aid which talents, assiduity, learning, and character could supply, to carry into execution a project vast in its conception, and extremely complicated, as well as delicate in its details. They found it in the famous Campomanes. Perhaps the grateful recollection of services, and the natural good-nature of Jovellanos, led him to praise too highly his early protector and precursor, in the studies which he himself brought to greater perfection. But Campomanes was an enlightened man, and a laborious as well as honest minister. He was at that time Fiscal of the Council and Chancellor of Castile, and considered by the profession of the law, as well as by the great commercial and political bodies throughout Spain, as an infallible oracle on all matters regarding the internal administration of the kingdom. The *Coleccion de Providencias tomadas por el gobierno sobre el estrañamiento y ocupacion de temporalidades de los Regulares de la Compañia* (Collection of measures taken by the Government for the alienation and seizure of the temporalities of the Regulars of the company of Jesuits) is said to be a monument of his diligence, sagacity, and vigour.

A royal decree was issued on 27th February, 1767, and dated from *el Pardo*, by which a Junta, composed of several members of the Royal Council, was instituted, in consequence of the riot of Madrid of the preceding year. To this Junta several bishops, selected from those who were most attached to the doctrines of Saint Thomas Aquinas, and, consequently, least favourable to the Jesuits, (for they espouse the rival tenets,) were added for the purpose of giving weight and authority to their decree. In this Junta the day and form of the measure were resolved upon, and instructions drawn out for the Magistrates who were to execute it both in Spain and in America, together with directions for the nature of the

preparations, the carriages to be provided at the various places inland, and the vessels to be ready in the ports. The precautions were well laid. The secret was wonderfully kept; and on the night of the first of April, at midnight precisely, every College of the Jesuits throughout Spain was surrounded by troops, and every member of each collected in their respective chapters, priests or lay-brothers, young or old, acquainted with the decree, and forcibly conveyed out of the kingdom. Their sufferings are well known; and the fortitude with which they bore them must extort praise even from those who are most convinced of the mischiefs which their long influence in the courts of Europe produced. The expulsion and persecution of the French priests during the Revolution was more bloody, but scarcely less inhuman, than the hardships inflicted by the regular and legitimate monarchies which had originally encouraged them, on the Jesuits. On the other hand, the suppression of that society was favourable to the cause of liberty, morals, and even learning;—for though their system of education has been much extolled, it must be acknowledged that in Spain, at least, the period at which the education of youth was chiefly entrusted to Jesuits, is that in which Castilian literature declined, and general ignorance prevailed. If the state of education in a country is to be judged of by its fruits, the Jesuits in Spain certainly retarded its progress. In relation to the rest of Europe, the Spaniards were farther advanced in science and learning during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, than during the seventeenth and eighteenth; and since the suppression of the Company, in 1767, and not till then, a taste for literature and a spirit of improvement revived among them.

NOTES.

NOTE A.

On the Devotion of the Spaniards to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary.—*p.* 22.

The history of the transactions relative to the disputes on the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, even when confined to those which took place at Seville, could not be compressed within the limits of one of the preceding letters. Such readers, besides, as take little interest in subjects of this nature, would probably have objected to a detailed account of absurdities, which seem at first sight scarcely to deserve any notice. Yet there are others to whom nothing is without interest which depicts any peculiar state of the human mind, and exhibits some of the innumerable modifications of society. Out of deference, therefore, to the first, we have detached the following narrative from the text of Doblado's Letters, casting the information we have collected from the Spanish writers into a note, the length of which will, we hope, be excused by those of the latter description.

The dispute on the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin began between the Dominicans and Franciscans as early as the thirteeeth century. The contending parties stood at first upon equal ground; but "the merits of faith and devotion" were so decidedly on the side of the Franciscans, that they soon had the Christian mob to support them, and it became dangerous for any Divine to assert that the *Mother of God* (such is the established language of the Church of Rome) had been, like the rest of mankind, involved in original sin. The oracle of the Capitol allowed, however, the disputants to fight out their battles, without shewing the least partiality, till public opinion had taken a decided turn.

In 1613, a Dominican, in a sermon preached at the cathedral of Seville, threw out some doubts on the Immaculate Conception. This was conceived to be an insult not only to the Virgin Mary, but to the community at large; and the populace was kept with difficulty from taking summary vengeance on the offender and his convent. Zúñiga, the annalist of Seville, who published his work in 1677, deems it a matter of Christian forbearance not to consign the names of the preacher and his convent to the execration of posterity. But if the civil and ecclesiastical authorities exerted themselves for the protection of the offenders, they were also the first to promote a series of expiatory rites, which might avert the anger of their Patroness, and make ample reparation to her insulted honour. Processions innumerable paraded the streets, proclaiming the original purity of the Virgin Mother; and *Miguél del Cid*, a *Sevillian* poet of that day, was urged by the Archbishop to compose the Spanish hymn, "Todo el Mundo en generál," which, though far below mediocrity, is still nightly sung at

Seville by the associations called Rosarios, which have been described in Doblado's Letters.*

The next step was to procure a decision of the Pope in favour of the *Immaculate Conception*. To promote this important object two commissioners were dispatched to Rome, both of them dignified clergymen, who had devoted their lives and fortunes to the cause of the Virgin Mary.

After four years of indescribable anxiety the long wished-for decree, which doomed to silence the opponents of Mary's original innocence, was known to be on the point of passing the *seal of the Fisherman*,† and the *Sevillians* held themselves in readiness to express their unbounded joy the very moment of its arrival in their town. This great event took place on the 22d of October 1617, at ten o'clock P.M. "The news, says Zúñiga, produced a universal stir in the town. Men left their houses to congratulate one another in the streets. The fraternity of the *Nazarenes* joining in a procession of more than six hundred persons, with lighted candles in their hands, sallied forth from their church, singing the hymn in honour of *Original Purity*. Numerous bonfires were lighted, the streets were illuminated from the windows and terraces, and ingenious fireworks were let off in different parts of the town. At midnight the bells of the cathedral broke out into a general chime, which was answered by every parish church and convent; and many persons in masks and fancy dresses having gathered before the archbishop's palace, his grace appeared at the balcony, moved to tears by the devout joy of his flock. At the first peal of the bells all the churches were thrown open, and the hymns and praises offered up in them lent

* Letter I. p. 20.

† *Sigillum* or *annulus Piscatoris*, the great seal of the Popes.

to the stillness of night the most lively sounds of the day."

A day was subsequently fixed when all the authorities were to take a solemn oath in the Cathedral, to believe and assert the *Immaculate Conception*. An endless series of processions followed to thank Heaven for the late triumph against the unbelievers. In fact, the people of Seville could not move about, for some time, without forming a religious procession. "Any boy," says a contemporary historian, "who, going upon an errand, chose to strike up the hymn *Todo el Mundo*, were sure to draw after him a train, which from one grew up into a multitude; for there was not a gentleman, clergyman, or friar, who did not join and follow the chorus which he thus happened to meet in the streets."

Besides these religious ceremonies, shows of a more worldly character were exhibited. Among these was the Moorish equestrian game, called, in Arabic, *El Jeerid*, and in Spanish, *Cañas*, from the reeds which, instead of javelins, the cavaliers dart at each other, as they go through a great variety of graceful and complicated evolutions on horseback.* *Fiestas Reales*, or bull-fights, where gentlemen enter the arena, were also exhibited on this occasion. To diversify, however, the spectacle, and indulge the popular taste, which requires a species of comic interlude, called *Mogiganga*, a dwarf, whose dimi-

* Gentlemen of the first rank, who are members of the associations called *Maestranzas*, perform at these games on the King's birth-day, and other public festivals. Horsemanship was formerly in great estimation among the Andalusian gentry, who joined in a variety of amusements connected with that art. Such was the *Parejas de Hachas*, a game performed by night, at which the riders bore lighted torches. When Philip the Fourth visited Seville, in 1624, one hundred gentlemen, each attended by two grooms, all with torches in their hands, ran races before the king. This was the only amusement which, according to the established notions, could be permitted in Lent.

nutive limbs required to have the stirrups fixed on the flap of the saddle, mounted on a milk-white horse, and attended by four negroes of gigantic stature, dressed in a splendid oriental costume, fought with one of the bulls, and drove a full span of his lance into the animal's body —a circumstance which was deemed too important to be omitted by the historiographers of Seville.

The most curious and characteristic of the shows was, however, an allegorical tournament, exhibited at the expense of the company of silk-weavers, who, from the monopoly with the Spanish Colonies, had attained great wealth and consequence at that period. It is thus described, from the records of the times, by a modern Spanish writer.

" Near the Puerta del Pardon (one of the gates of the cathedral), a platform was erected, terminating under the altar dedicated to the Virgin, which stands over the gate.* Three splendid seats were placed at the foot of the altar, and two avenues railed in on both sides of the platform to admit the Judges, the challenger, the supporters or seconds, the marshal, and the adventurers. Near one of the corners of the stage was pitched the challenger's tent of black and brown silk, and in it a seat covered with black velvet. In front stood the figure of an apple-tree bearing fruit, and hanging from its boughs a target, on which the challenge was exposed to view.

" At five in the afternoon, the Marshal, attended by his Adjutant, presented himself in the lists. He was followed by four children, in the dress used to represent

* The reader must be aware that this was an imitation of a foot tournament, an amusement as frequent among the ancient Spanish knights as the jousts on horseback. It is called in the Spanish Chronicles *Tornéo de a pié*.

angels, with lighted torches in their hands. Another child, personating Michael the Archangel, was the leader of a second group of six angels, who were the bearers of the prizes—a Lamb and a Male Infant. The Judges, Justice and Mercy, appeared last of all, and took their appointed seats.

"The sound of drums, fifes, and clarions, announced soon after, the approach of another group, composed of two savages of gigantic dimensions, with large clubs on their shoulders, eight torch-bearers in black, and two infernal Furies, and, in the centre, the challenger's shield-bearer, followed by the challenger's supporter or second, dressed in black and gold, with a plume of black and yellow feathers. This band having walked round the stage, the second brought the challenger out of the tent, who, dressed uniformly with his supporter, appeared wielding a lance twenty-five hands in length.*

The following is a list of the Adventurers, their attendants, or torch-bearers, and supporters or seconds:—

Adam	Attendants 6 Clowns	Seconds— Hope and Innocence.
Cain	6 Infernal Furies	Envy.
Abraham	6 Dwarfs,† three Angels in the habit of Pilgrims, and Isaac	Faith.
Job	6 Pages	Patience.
David	6 Squires	Repentance.
Jeroboam	4 Jews	Idolatry.
Ahab	12 Squires	Covetousness.
John the Baptist	12 Squires	Divine Love and Grace.

* Though the Spanish writer has forgotten to mention the allegory of the challenger, it is evident, from the sequel, that he was intended to represent *Sin*.

† Dwarfs were formerly very common among the servants of the Spanish nobility. But it is not easy to guess for what reason they were allotted to Abraham, on this occasion.

"The dresses (continues the historian) were all splendid, and suited to the characters.

"The Adventurers engaged the challenger in succession, and all were wounded by the first stroke of his enormous lance. In this state they drew their swords, and fought with various success, some conquering the common enemy, while others yielded to his superior force. None, however, distinguished himself so much as the Baptist, who, regardless of the wound he had received at the first onset, and being armed with fresh weapons by *Grace*, beat the adversary in every succeeding rencounter. His extraordinary success was rewarded with a seat near the Judges, and the Lamb was awarded him as a prize.

"After this, the Marshal and his Adjutant, followed by *Grace* and *Divine Love*, left the stage. In a short time they re-appeared, followed by twelve youths, as torch-bearers, the seven Virtues* personated by children from four to five years of age, and nine Angels, as representatives of the nine hierarchies. Two squires attended each of the Virtues and Angels; the whole train being closed by *Grace* and *Divine Love*, supporting the last Adventurer, a beautiful child seven years old, who, as intended to represent the Holy Virgin, was more splendidly dressed than the rest, in a suit of sky-blue and white, sprinkled with golden stars, the hair flowing down the shoulders in curls, and held round the head by a twelve-starred diadem.

"When the combatants faced each other, the challenger could not conceal his trepidation. The female Adventurer, on the other hand, would not use the lance with which she had entered the lists; for it bore the words Daughter of Adam, in a banderole which hung from

* The Spanish Catechism enumerates seven vices and seven opposite virtues.

it. Having thrown away that weapon, she received another from the seconds, with the inscription DAUGHTER OF THE FATHER. At this moment the challenger darted his lance; but in his fear and confusion, he could not touch his adversary, while the heroine, on the contrary, taking an unerring aim at his breast, brought him instantly upon his knees; and the victory was completed with two other lances, bearing the mottoes—MOTHER OF THE SON—SPOUSE OF THE HOLY GHOST. Unhurt by her adversary, she had now laid him on the ground, and placed her foot and sword upon his neck, amidst a shout of universal acclamation. The Judges awarded her the *Child Jesus,* as a prize, and seated her above all in a throne. Next under the Virgin took their seats *Divine Love, Grace, Michael,* and *John the Baptist,* and a general tournament ensued, in which all the other combatants engaged. The tournament being ended, the challenger and his second retired through the left avenue. The rest of the actors conducted the victor, through that on the right, attended by one hundred and forty torch-bearers, and a band of musicians singing her triumphal hymn, which was echoed by the immense concourse." *Compendio Historico de Sevilla por Don Fermin Arana de Varflora* (Padre Valderrama) p. 77, et seq.

NOTE B.

On a Passage in Xenophon.—p. 46.

The passage from Xenophon translated in the text is this: Οἱ οὖν ἀμφὶ τὸν Σωκράτην πρῶτον μὲν, ὥσπερ εἰκὸς ἦν, ἐπαινοῦντες τὴν κλῆσιν, οὐχ ὑπισχνουντο συνδειπνήσειν. ὡς δὲ πάνυ ἀχθόμενος φανερὸς ἦν, εἰ μὴ ἕψοιντο, συνηκολούθησαν. Sympos. c. 1. 7. Ernesti is angry at the ὥσπερ εἰκὸς, which is soon

after repeated, when speaking of the order in which the guests placed themselves at table. He wants, in the last passage, to change it into ὡς ἔτυχον. But though the emendation is plausible, there seems to be no necessity to alter the reading. Xenophon is, indeed, remarkably fond of that phrase. The εἰκὸς, in both places, probably means *according to custom.* It might be applied to the order of precedence in England, and it should seem to have been used by Xenophon to denote the Greek sense of propriety in taking a place at table. In Spain, where there is no established order, a great deal of bowing and scraping takes place before the guests can arrange that important point. But, without any settled rule, there is a tact which seldom misleads any one who wishes not to give offence. This is probably the second ὥσπερ εἰκὸς of Xenophon.

NOTE C.

" *A little work that gave an amusing Miracle of the Virgin for every Day in the Year.*" p. 70.

The book alluded to in the text is the *Año Virgineo.* The moral tendency of this and similar books may be shewn by the following story—technically named an *Example*—which I will venture to give from memory:—A Spanish soldier, who had fought in the Netherlands, having returned home with some booty, was leading a profligate and desperate life. He had, however, bled for the Faith: and his own was perfectly orthodox. A large old picture of the Virgin Mary hung over the inside of the door of his lodgings, which, it seems, did not correspond in loftiness to the brave halberdier's mind and demeanour. Early every morning he used to sally forth in pursuit of unlawful pleasure; but, though he

never did bend his knees in prayer, he would not cross the threshold without a loud *Hail Mary!* to the picture, accompanied by an inclination of the halbert, which partly from his outrageous hurry to break out of the nightly prison, partly from want of room for his military salute, inflicted many a wound on the canvass. Thus our soldier went on spending his life and money, till a sharp Spanish dagger composed him to rest, in the heat of a brawl. "He died and made no sign." The Devil, who thought him as fair a prize as any that had ever been within his grasp, waited only for the sentence which, according to Catholics, is passed on every individual immediately after death, in what they call the *Particular Judgment.* At this critical moment the Virgin Mary presented herself in a black mantle, similar to that which she wore in the picture, but sadly rent and slit in several places. "These are the marks," she said to the affrighted soul, "of your rude, though certainly well-meant civility. I will not, however, permit that one who has so cordially saluted me every day, should go into everlasting fire." Thus saying, she bade the evil spirit give up his prisoner, and the gallant soldier was sent to purge off the dross of his boisterous nature, in the gentler flames of purgatory.—A portion of the book from which I recollect this story, was, for many years, read every evening in one of the principal parishes at Seville. I observed the same practice at a town not far from the capital of Andalusia; and, for any thing I know to the contrary, it may be very common all over Spain. Such is the doctrine which, disowned in theory by the divines of the Roman church, but growing out of the system of saint-worship, constitutes the main religious feeling of the vulgar, and taints strongly the minds of the higher classes in Spain. The Chronicles of the Religious Orders are full of nar-

ratives, the whole drift of which is to represent their patron saint as powerful to save from the very jaws of hell. The skill of the painter has often been engaged to exhibit these stories to the eye, and the Spanish convents abound in pictures more encouraging to vice than the most profligate prints of the Palais Royal. I recollect one at Seville in the convent of the Antonines—a species of the genus *Monachus Franciscanus* of the *Monachologia*—so strangely absurd, that I hope the reader will forgive my lengthening this note with its description. The picture I allude to was in the cloisters of the convent of San Antonio, facing the principal entrance, so late as the year 1810, when I was last at Seville. The subject is the hair-breadth escape of a great sinner, whom St. Francis saved against all chances. An extract from the Chronicles of the Order, which is found in a corner of the painting, informs the beholder that the person whose soul is represented on the canvass, was a lawless nobleman, who, fortified in his own castle, became the terror and abhorrence of the neighbourhood. As neither the life of man, nor the honour of woman, was safe from the violence of his passions, none willingly dwelt upon his lands, or approached the gate of the castle. It chanced, however, that two Franciscan friars, having lost the way in a stormy night, applied for shelter at the wicked nobleman's gate, where they met with nothing but insult and scorn. It was well for them that the fame of St. Francis filled the world at that time. The holy saint, with the assistance of St. Paul, had lately cut the throat of an Italian bishop, who had resisted the establishment of the Franciscans in his diocese.*

* This curious scene is the subject of another picture in the cloisters of Saint Francis, at Seville. The bishop is seen in his bed,

The fear of a similar punishment abated the fierceness of the nobleman, and he ordered his servants to give the friars some clean straw for a bed, and a couple of eggs for their supper. Having given this explanation, the painter trusts to the appropriate language of his art, and takes up the story immediately after the death of the noble sinner. Michael the archangel—who by a traditional belief, universal in Spain, and probably common to all Catholic countries, is considered to have the charge of weighing departed souls with their good works, against the sins they have committed—is represented with a large pair of scales in his hand. Several angels, in a group, stand near him, and a crowd of devils are watching, at a respectful distance, the result of the trial. The newly-departed soul, in the puny shape of a sickly boy, has been placed, naked, in one scale, while the opposite groans under a monstrous heap of swords, daggers, poisoned bows, love-letters, and portraits of females, who had been the victims of his fierce desires. It is evident that this ponderous mass would have greatly outweighed the slight and nearly transparent form which was to oppose its pressure, had not Saint Francis, whose figure stands prominent in the painting, assisted the dis-

where Saint Francis has neatly severed the head from the body with Saint Paul's sword, which he had borrowed for this pious purpose. As the good friars might have been suspected of having a hand in this miracle, the saint performed an additional wonder. The figures of Saint Paul and Saint Francis stood side by side in a painted glass window of the principal convent of the order. The apostle had a sword in his hand, while his companion was weaponless. To the great surprise of the fathers, it was observed, one morning, that Saint Paul had given away the sword to his friend. The death of the bishop, which happened that very night, explained the wonder, and taught the world what those might expect who thwarted the plans of Heaven in the establishment of the Franciscans.

tressed soul by slipping a couple of eggs and a bundle of straw into its own side of the balance. Upon this seasonable addition, the instruments and emblems of guilt are seen to fly up and kick the beam. It appears from this that the Spanish painter agrees with Milton in the system of weighing Fate: and that, since the days of Homer and Virgil, superior weight is become the sign of victory, which with them was that of defeat—*quo vergat pondere lethum*.

NOTE D.

On the Moral Character of the Spanish Jesuits, p. 77.

Whatever we may think of the political delinquencies of their leaders, their bitterest enemies have never ventured to charge the Order of Jesuits with moral irregularities. The internal policy of that body precluded the possibility of gross misconduct. No Jesuit could step out of doors without calling on the superior for leave and a companion, in the choice of whom great care was taken to vary the couples. Never were they allowed to pass a single night out of the convent, except when attending a dying person: and, even then, they were under the strictest injunctions to return at whatever hour the soul departed. Nothing, however, can give a more striking view of the discipline and internal government of the Jesuits than a case well known in my family, which I shall here insert as not devoid of interest. A Jesuit of good connexions, and more than common abilities, had, during a long residence at Granada, become a general favourite, and especially in a family of distinction where there were some young ladies. On one of the three days properly named the Carnival, he happened to call at that house, and found the whole family indulging with a few intimate

friends in the usual mirth of the season; but all in a private domestic manner. With the freedom and vivacity peculiar to Spanish females, the young ladies formed a conspiracy to make their favourite Jesuit stand up and dance with them. Resistance was in vain: they teased and cajoled the poor man, till he, in good-natured condescension, got up, moved in the dance for a few minutes, and retired again to his seat. Years elapsed: he was removed from Granada, and probably forgot the transient gaiety into which he had been betrayed. It is well known that the general of the Jesuits, who made Rome his constant residence, appointed from thence to every office in the order all over the world. But so little caprice influenced those nominations, that the friends of the unfortunate dancer were daily expecting to see him elected provincial governor of the Jesuits in Andalusia. To their great surprise, however, the election fell upon a much inferior man. As the elections were triennial, the strongest interest was made for the next turn. Pressed on all sides, the general desired his secretary to return a written answer. It was conceived in these words: "It cannot be: he danced at Granada."

I have seen Capuchin friars, the most austere order of Franciscans, rattling on a guitar, and singing Boleros before a mixed company in the open fields; and I have heard of a friar, who being called to watch over a death-bed, in a decent but poor family, had the audacity to take gross liberties with a female in the very room where the sick man lay speechless. He recovered, however, strength enough to communicate this horrid insult to his son, from whom I have the fact. The convent to which this friar belonged, is notorious, among the lower classes, for profligacy.

I shall add a little trait illustrative of Spanish manners.

A friar in high glee is commonly reminded of his profession, in a jeering tone, by the wags of the company. Cries of, *Cáñamo, Padre,* (hemp, my father!) are heard from all sides, alluding to the scourge used for the discipline, which is made of that substance, and recommending it as a proper cure for rebellious spirits. These two words will cut a friar to the heart.

NOTE E.

"On the Prevalence of Scepticism among the Catholic Clergy." p. 100.

I once heard an English gentleman, who had resided a long time in Italy, where he obtained lodgings in a convent, relate his surprise at the termination of a friendly discussion which he had with the most able individuals of the house, on the points of difference between the Churches of England and Rome. The dispute had been animated, and supported with great ability on the Catholic side by one of the youngest monks. When, at length, all, except the chief disputants, had retired, the young monk, turning to his English guest, asked him whether he really believed what he had been *defending?* Upon receiving a serious answer in the affirmative, he could not help exclaiming, *Allor lei crede più che tutto il convento.*

NOTE F.

"The Child God." p. 147.

The representation of the Deity in the form of a child is very common in Spain. The number of little figures, about a foot high, called Niño Dios, or Niño Jesus, is nearly equal to that of nuns in most convents. The nuns dress them in all the variety of the national

costumes, such as clergymen, canons in their choral robes, doctors of divinity in their hoods, physicians in their wigs and gold-headed canes, &c. &c. The Niño Jesus is often found in private houses; and in some parts of Spain, where contraband trade is the main occupation of the people, is seen in the dress of a smuggler with a brace of pistols at his girdle, and a blunderbuss leaning on his arm.

NOTE G.

"*On the Town of Olbera.*" p. 170.

In De Rocca's "*Memoires sur la Guerre des Français en Espagne,*" there is a trait so perfectly in character with Don Leucadio's description of the people of Olbera, that I must beg leave to transcribe it:—

"Nous formâmes un bivouac dans une prairie entourée de murs, attenante à l'auberge qui est sur la route au bas du village. Les habitans furent, pendant le reste du jour, assez tranquilles en apparence, et ils nous fournirent des vivres; mais, au lieu d'un jeune bœuf que j'avais demandé, ils nous apportèrent un âne coupé en quartiers: les hussards trouvèrent que ce veau, comme ils l'appellaient, avait le goût un peu fade; mais ce ne fut que long-temps après que nous apprîmes cette bizarre tromperie, par les montagnards eux-mêmes. Ils nous criaient souvent, dans la suite, en tiraillant avec nous, 'Vous avez mangé de l'âne à Olbera.' C'était, dans leur opinion, la plus sanglante des injures qu'on pût faire à des chrétiens."

De Rocca's book abounds in lively pictures of Spanish manners, especially in the account he gives of the Serrania de Ronda; without indulging national partialities, he does full justice to his mortal enemies, and represents

them in the most favourable colours which were consistent with truth.

NOTE II.

"The effectual aid given by that Crucifix in the Plague of 1469, *was upon record."* p. 174.

Zuñiga, in his Annals, copies a Spanish inscription, which still exists in the convent of Saint Augustin, at Seville; of which I subjoin a translation:—

"In 1649, this town being under a most violent attack of the plague, of which great numbers died,* the two most illustrious Chapters, Ecclesiatical and Secular, requested that this community of our father St. Augustin, should allow the image of Christ to be carried to the Cathedral. It was, accordingly, conveyed, on the second of July of the same year, in a solemn procession, attended by the Secular Chapter (the Town Corporation), and all the religious communities, amidst the loud wailings of the people; when the most illustrious the Chapter of the Cathedral walked to meet the procession at the end of the street of the *Placentines*.† The most holy image was left that evening and the ensuing night in the

* Espinosa, the modern editor and annotator of Zuniga, states, from ancient records, that within the first six weeks after the appearance of the plague, the number of deaths amounted to eighty thousand. This, however, we consider as a palpable exaggeration; for, though Seville was nearly depopulated on that occasion, it is probable that it never contained more than one hundred thousand inhabitants.

† Seville has several streets bearing the name of foreign nations —a faint memorial of its former commerce and wealth. The street of the *Placentines* is a continuation of that of the Franks (Francos). There is a Lombard Street (calle Lombardos), a *Genoa Street*, and some others of a similar denomination.

Cathedral, and returned the next day to its shrine, our Lord being pleased to ordain that the plague should begin to abate from the day when the image was brought out, and cease altogether at the end of the *Octavario*, (eight days worship), as it was attested by the physicians. Wherefore the most noble and most loyal city of Seville appointed the said second of July, for ever, to repair to this convent as an act of thanksgiving for that great benefit."

In spite of this solemn acknowledgment of the miracle, the *astrologers* of that day were unwilling to give the crucifix the whole credit of staying the plague. Zuñiga shrewdly observes that the conjunction of Jupiter with Mars, which, according to Captain Francis de Ruesta, removed the infection, did not take place till the 12th of July, ten days after the wonderful effects of the procession had become visible: and the Captain himself, probably to keep clear of the Inquisition, declares that the favourable influence of the planets "was previously *ensured* by the exhibition of the Holy Christ of Saint Augustin." *Zuñiga, Anales de Sevilla*, t. iv. p. 404.

NOTE I.

"*Vicious Habits of the Religious Probationers.*" p. 195.

The Spanish satirical novel, "*Fray Gerundio de Campazas*," contains a lively picture of the adventures of a Novice. It was written by Padre Isla, a Jesuit, for the purpose of checking the foppery and absurdity of the popular preachers. Cervantes himself could not boast of greater success in banishing the books of Chivalry than Isla in shaming the friars out of the affected and often profane *concetti*, which, in his time, were mistaken for pulpit eloquence. But the Inquisition could not

endure that her great props, the religious orders, should be exposed, in any of their members, to the shafts of ridicule; and *Fray Gerundio* was prohibited.

NOTE K.

A book entitled *Memorias para la vida del Excmo. Señor D. Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos*, was published, at Madrid, in 1814, by Cean Bermudez. This gentleman, whose uninterrupted intimacy from early youth with the subject of his Memoirs, enabled him to draw an animated picture of one of the most interesting men that Spain has produced in her decline, has, probably, from the habits of reserve and false notions of decorum, still prevalent in that country, greatly disappointed our hopes. What relates to Jovellanos himself is confined to a few pages, containing little more than the dates of events connected with his public life, some vague declamation, and a few inuendos on the great intrigues which, having raised him to the ministry, confined him soon after to the fortress of Bellver. The second part contains a catalogue, and a slight analysis of his works. The friends of Jovellanos, however, are indebted to the author of the Memorias, for the help which this collection of notes on the life of that truly excellent and amiable man will afford any future writer who, with more settled habits of freedom, and altogether under more favourable circumstances, shall undertake to draw the full-length picture of which we yet scarcely possees a sketch.

For the satisfaction of such of our readers as may wish to know the fate of Jovellanos, we subjoin a brief account of the last years of his life.

Upon the accession of Ferdinand VII., Jovellanos was, by royal order, released from his confinement, and

subsequently elected a Member of the Central Junta. When the French entered Seville in 1810, and the Regency of Cadiz superseded the Junta, he wished to retire to his native place, Gijon, in Asturias.

The popular feeling, exasperated by national misfortunes, was now venting itself against the abdicated Government, to whose want of energy the advantages of the French were indiscriminately attributed; and Jovellanos, accidentally detained in the Bay of Cadiz, had the mortification of learning that he was involved in the absurd and shameful suspicion of having shared in the spoil of the Spanish treasury, with which the Central Junta was charged. A dignified appeal to the candour of the nation, which he sent to the Cadiz papers for insertion, was not permitted to see the light—so narrow and illiberal were the views of the Regency—and the feeling and high-minded Castilian had to sail under the intolerable apprehension that some of his countrymen might look upon him as a felon endeavouring to abscond from justice.

If any one circumstance could add to the painfulness of Jovellanos' situation, it was that, while the thoughtlessness or the ingratitude of his countrymen thus involved him in a suspicion of peculation, the state of his finances was such as to have obliged him to accept the sum of little more than one hundred pounds, the savings of many year's service, which his trusty valet pressed upon him, with tears, that he might defray the expenses of their removal from Seville.

After being almost wrecked on the coast of Galicia, Jovellanos was obliged to land at the small town of Muros. Here he had to endure a fresh insult from the petty Junta of that province, by whose orders his papers were minutely searched, and copies taken at the option

of an officer sent for that purpose with a military detachment.

A temporary retreat of the French from Gijon enabled Jovellanos to revisit his native town; but an unexpected return of the invaders obliged him soon after to take ship with the utmost precipitation, His flight was so sudden that he was actually at sea without having determined upon a place of refuge. Had the venerable and unhappy fugitive listened to the repeated invitations which his intimate friend Lord Holland sent him after the first appearance of danger from the progress of the French, his life might have been prolonged under the hospitable roof of Holland House. But Jovellanos's notions of public duty were too exalted and romantic: and he would not quit Spain while there was a single spot in the possession of her patriots.

In attempting to reach by sea the port of Ribadeo, where there lay a Spanish frigate, in which he hoped to find a passage to Cadiz, another storm kept him for eight days under the peculiar hardships of a dangerous navigation in a small and crowded ship. Exhausted both in body and mind, and with a heart almost broken by the ill-treatment he had met with at the close of a long life spent in the service of his country, he landed at Vega, where, the poverty of the town offering no better accommodations, he was placed in the same room with Valdés Llanos, an old friend and relation, who had joined him in the flight, and seemed so shattered by age and fatigue, as not to be able to survive the effects of the late storm. Here Jovellanos employed his remaining strength in nursing and comforting his fellow-sufferer, till, Valdés being near his end, his friend was, according to the notions of the country, removed to another room. But death had also laid his hand on Jovellanos. Two

days after completing his sixty-sixth year, he was laid in the same grave with his friend.*

* In the Appendix No. 2, to Lord Holland's *Life of Lope de Vega* are found both the originals and translations of some eloquent passages from Jovellanos's pen, to which I have made an allusion in this note. His portrait also, from a marble bust executed at Seville by Don Angel Monasterio, at his lordship's desire, and now in his possession, is prefixed to the second volume of the same work.

THE END.